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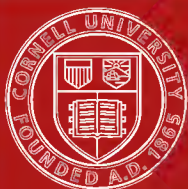
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Nearly Married

BY

EDGAR SELWYN



SAMUEL FRENCH, 23-30 West 38th St., New York

NEARLY MARRIED

A FARCE IN THREE ACTS

BY

EDGAR SELWYN

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THE FOLLOWING IS A COPY OF THE PLAY BILL OF
THE FIRST PERFORMANCE OF "NEARLY MARRIED"—
AS PRODUCED AT GAIETY THEATRE, NEW YORK,
SEPTEMBER 10TH, 1913.

COHAN & HARRIS

PRESENT

EDGAR SELWYN'S NEW FARCE

"NEARLY MARRIED"

WITH

BRUCE McRAE

ORIGINAL CAST

HATTIE KING.....	<i>Virginia Pearson</i>
HOTEL PAGE.....	<i>Harry Loraine</i>
MAID AT THE HOTEL.....	<i>Mabel Acker</i>
BETTY LINDSEY.....	<i>Jane Grey</i>
GERTRUDE ROBINSON.....	<i>Ruth Shepley</i>
TOM ROBINSON.....	<i>Mark Smith</i>
A WAITER.....	<i>William J. Phinney</i>
HARRY LINDSAY.....	<i>Bruce McRae</i>
RICHARD GIFFON.....	<i>John Westley</i>
PRINCE RANJABOULLE.....	<i>Schuyler Ladd</i>
NORAH.....	<i>Georgia Lawrence</i>
PETER DOOLIN.....	<i>Robert Fisher</i>
CHAUFFEUR.....	<i>Wm. J. Phinney</i>
FIREMAN.....	<i>Harry Loraine</i>
2nd FIREMAN.....	<i>Delmar E. Clark</i>

NEARLY MARRIED

CHARACTERS

(In the order of their appearance.)

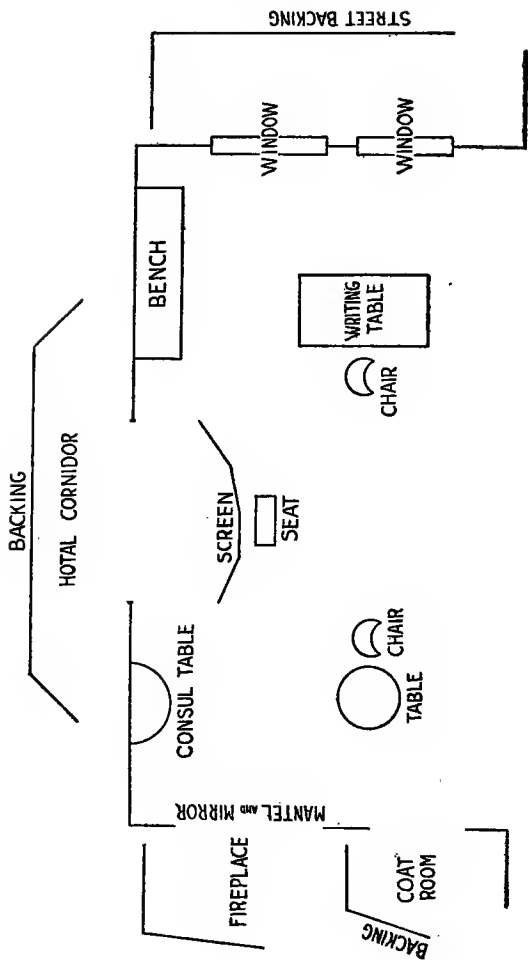
HATTIE KING.....*Divorce specialist*
HOTEL PAGE
MAID AT THE HOTEL
GERTRUDE ROBINSON
BETTY LINDSEY
TOM ROBINSON
WAITER
HARRY LINDSEY
RICHARD GIFFEN
PRINCE RANJE BULLE..*Of the "Cherry Tree Inn"*
NORAH.....*His wife*
PETER DOOLIN.....*A justice of the peace*
TAXI CHAUFFEUR
FIREMAN

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

- ACT I. A Public room in a Fifth Avenue hotel,
New York City. Late afternoon in
October.
- ACT II. The Cherry Tree Inn. Near Oscawana-
on-Hudson. Evening of the same
day.
- ACT III. The same. Half an hour later.

NEARLY MARRIED

DIAGRAM - ACT-1



NEARLY MARRIED

ACT I

SCENE: *A public room in a Fifth Avenue hotel, New York City.*

TIME: *Late afternoon in October.*

AT RISE: HATTIE discovered seated on stage in chair to R. of table down L. Her hat on, her coat thrown over back of chair, pen and envelope containing a note, in hand.

PAGE is standing on stage just to R. of HATTIE, at attention, card-tray in hand.

An orchestra plays a waltz, then curtain rises.

HATTIE seals envelope and writes address on it—passes note to PAGE.

HATTIE. For Mr. Lindsey. He's sure to be in the hotel somewhere.

PAGE. (*Looking at address on note*) Mr. Lindsey.

HATTIE. Yes, Mr. Harry Lindsey. I'll wait here.

PAGE. Yes, ma'am. (*Exits up c. into corridor, and off to R., calling*) Mr. Lindsey, please!—Mr. Lindsey, please!—Mr. Lindsey, please!

(*As PAGE turns up c., HATTIE gets coat from down L. and crosses straight toward door down R. BETTY and GERTRUDE, as PAGE steps into corridor up c. in making exit, start from off up c. to L., and enter c.*)

BETTY. (*As she becomes visible to audience at c. arch*) We may as well leave our coats in here. It's so warm! (*Coming with GERTRUDE down L. of screen c.*) Did Tom think to reserve a table?

(MAID *enters down R. HATTIE gives her coat to MAID, who exits down R.*)

GERTRUDE. My dear, he has a mortgage on the Maitre d'Hotel. (*During this line she crosses with BETTY to just L. of table down R., but draws back on seeing HATTIE*)

(HATTIE, *with characteristic business, shrugs shoulders and exits down R.*)

BETTY. (*Accepts HATTIE's gesture, and crossing GERTRUDE to L. lower corner table down R., looking after HATTIE*) Who is that?

GERTRUDE. Hattie King.

BETTY. (*Turning to GERTRUDE, at a loss*) Hattie King?

GERTRUDE. Yes. (*In a matter of fact manner*) The woman who was hired to act as co-respondent in your divorce-suit. Haven't you seen her before?

BETTY. (*During above lines, on word "suit," she faces down R.*) No. That was all arranged between our lawyers. (*Entire change of demeanor, as she rises jealously*)

GERTRUDE. (*Trying to reason it out*) But you know they had to employ some woman.

BETTY. (*Jealously, looking off down R.*) I'd no idea she was as good-looking as that!

GERTRUDE. (*Casually, turning c. two steps, playing with her gloves*) She is rather attractive—but I suppose she must have some fascination for the men or she wouldn't be in such a queer business.

BETTY. Such a woman ought not to be allowed in a hotel like this!

GERTRUDE. (*With surprise*) My dear girl, you employed her yourself!

BETTY. (*Jealously*) I'd never have agreed to it if I'd known what she looked like! I understand that my husband is being seen everywhere with her?

GERTRUDE. (*Pointedly, and a trifle impatiently*) What do you care what he does now?

BETTY. (*Heap up*) I don't care. But you'd think he'd have enough respect for me not to be seen in public with her until after the divorce is granted! (*Faces R. 1, keeping HATTIE in mind*)

PAGE. (*Off up R.*) Mr. Lindsey, please!

(*HATTIE enters down R. with haughty look at duo. Goes up to mirror over mantel R., looks in mirror, giving little touches to hair, etc.*)

(*Stop music.*)

BETTY. (*Sotto voce, moving to GERTURDE quickly and keeping HATTIE in view*) Look!—I'll bet she's waiting for him now!

GERTRUDE. (*Impatiently*) Don't be a little goose! (*Taking BETTY below table toward R. 1*) Come along. We mustn't keep Tom waiting.

(*PAGE enters up C. from R., goes down to HATTIE R. C. BETTY and GERTRUDE exit down R. HATTIE moves R. C. a few steps*)

PAGE. Can't find Mr. Lindsey, ma'am.

HATTIE. Did you look in the men's café?

PAGE. No, ma'am.

HATTIE. Well, you'll probably find him leaning against the bar. Hurry now. (*Turns down R. of table*)

(*TOM enters up C. from L. to C. of L. C., carrying newspaper.*)

PAGE. Yes, ma'am. (*Exits R. of screen to C. and off L.*)

HATTIE. (*Glances after page. Sees TOM.—Cordially*) Oh! How do you do, Mr. Robinson?

TOM. (*c., embarrassed*) Hel-lo! What—what are you doing here?

HATTIE. (*On the defensive*) I've as much right here as you have!

TOM. (*c.*) I didn't mean that: I meant——

HATTIE. (*Just below table down R.—Easily*) Oh, it's all right. You needn't get nervous because your wife is here. (*TOM shows anxiety. HATTIE, continuing, and indicating entrance down R.*) She just went inside with Mrs. Lindsey.

TOM. (*With surprise and anxiety, coming R. a step*) I didn't know that you knew Mrs. Lindsey?

HATTIE. (*With a movement*) I supplied the evidence for her divorce!

TOM. (*Embarrassed*) Yes, I know, but——

HATTIE. (*Continuing*) And besides—it's my business to know everybody. By the way—(*Crossing to TOM*) You didn't happen to see Mr. Lindsey about, did you?

TOM. (*With surprise,—anxiously*) You don't mean to tell me Harry's coming here?

HATTIE. We have an appointment for tea.

TOM. (*Worried, going L. to chair by table*) Oh—that's going to be awkward! (*Facing HATTIE*) Harry should have gone somewhere else!

HATTIE. (*Resenting it*) Why should he?—This is a public place.

TOM. I know—(*Lays down the case, faces HATTIE*) But here's a man being divorced, and his wife happens to drop in at the same place where he is having tea with—(*HATTIE gives TOM a warning look*) Well, with the lady who is named in his wife's "Bill of Complaint."

HATTIE. (*Satisfied,—casually*) Well—that's my

business. If wives didn't complain I'd have to look for another job.

TOM. (*Ingratiatingly, going toward HATTIE*) You wouldn't have to look very far.

HATTIE. Yes—? Polishing claws in a manicure-shop at twelve per. (*Faces TOM*) Not for me, thank you. (*Rattling her lines*) This way I'm my own boss—travel in good society—(*Pointedly*) And get well paid for doing it. (*Sits L. of table down R.*) At the same time I'm doing a lot of good in the world. (*Sincerely: "Hattie's" philosophy*)

TOM. (*At c.—at a loss*) How do you make that out?

HATTIE. (*Easily,—facing TOM*) Well—take your friends the Lindseys, for instance. Both of them want to quit, and the law won't give them a divorce unless one of them commits a criminal offence. I come along, do a moving-picture act in front of a couple of witnesses, and they get what they want. (*Looks down R. taking BETTY in*) Why, Mrs. Lindsey ought to be down on her knees to me! (*Thoroughly believes it*)

TOM. (*With a humoring smile*) That is expecting too much of human nature. In her case, you happen to be the "other woman," you know.

HATTIE. (*Resenting this*) There's no law against our having tea together.

TOM. (*Jollying HATTIE along,—going toward her*) No, but you can't expect her to feel exactly pleased about it. (*To HATTIE, coaxingly, taking her hands*) Under the circumstances I think that you and Harry ought to go somewhere else. (*Raises HATTIE*)

HATTIE. You've got your nerve with you!

TOM. (*Coaxingly, backing to c., dragging HATTIE by the hands,—smilingly*) Oh, come on, now—be decent. If only as a favor to me.

HATTIE. (*Smiling, liking TOM, jollying him*)

along) I like the way you say it, little one—but it can't be done.

GERTRUDE. (*Enters down R. in time to catch last words, goes to R. of table down R. In a hurt tone,—at a loss,—sings line*) Tom!

TOM. (*Astonished, looks at GERTRUDE, goes L. to chair by table down L.*) Yes, dear.—Yes——

HATTIE. (*Takes in GERTRUDE with eye, fishing for introduction*) Your wife, I believe? (*Looks at GERTRUDE smilingly. GERTRUDE tosses her head. goes up-stage a step, and faces front. TOM looks in front—miserably. HATTIE, with sarcastic smile at GERTRUDE, opens handbag, takes out business card, crosses to TOM, raises his right arm, puts card in his nerveless hand, and closes his fingers over it*) Don't forget me when you're—(*Looks at GERTRUDE*) having trouble.

(*GERTRUDE eyeing this intently, tosses head at HATTIE'S look. TOM'S arm drops nervelessly to side, holding card. HATTIE, keeping GERTRUDE in view with sarcastic smile, crosses front and exits down R.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Keeps HATTIE in view with disdain, and comes to C. Looks after HATTIE a moment, faces TOM, and sings line*) Tom—what did she put in your hand? (*TOM faces front, raises right arm and hand, holding card. GERTRUDE crosses to TOM, takes card, looks at it. Getting the information, shows no surprise*) "Hattie King. Divorce Specialist." (*Looks down R. after HATTIE, breaks out in indignation*) Well! I never heard of such cheek! (*To TOM, angrily, pointing her lines*) Now, what could you have possibly said to her to make her think you needed—this?

TOM. (*Hurriedly, on the defensive, facing GERTRUDE*) Nothing. Nothing at all! I only asked her to go somewhere else for her tea.

GERTRUDE. (*Pointedly*) And why should she?

TOM. Well, I thought Harry ought to show that much consideration for his wife.

GERTRUDE. (*With surprise and anxiety*) Is Harry Lindsey here?

TOM. She's expecting him. (*Indicating down R.*)

GERTRUDE. Good heavens! (*Goes to table down R.*) If Betty sees them together she'll have another emotional spasm! (*Turns to TOM, C.*) Well, we must make some excuse and go to another hotel.

TOM. (*At C., childishly*) But they have such nice chocolate cake here!

GERTRUDE. (*Coldly*) You'll have to put up with some other kind. (*Turns R. a step*)

TOM. (*Seeking excuse for not leaving*) That's all very well, but what excuse are we to make to Betty?

GERTRUDE. (*Facing TOM, in a matter of fact tone*) Say—you've found it impossible to secure a table!

TOM. (*Trying another tack*) I've already tipped a fellow to hold one for me.

GERTRUDE. (*Impatiently*) Oh, don't be stupid! (*Crossing to TOM*) What does a little tip matter? (*Searching in handbag*) Did I give you the coat checks? (*Finds them in bag*) No, here they are. (*Turns R.*)

BETTY. (*Enters down R. stands R. of table L.*) Have I kept you waiting?

(*TOM, in disgust, goes below table down L.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Crossing to BETTY, lying casually*) Oh, Betty, dear! I'm afraid we'll have to get our things and find some other place. Tom couldn't get a table.

(*TOM has business, front.*)

BETTY. (*Disappointedly, wanting to stay*) I thought he reserved one.

GERTRUDE. (*Easily*) I thought so, too! (*Heaping it on Tom*) But, as usual, he forgot! (*Tom accepts this ill-naturedly. GERTRUDE making the best of things*) However, one place is as good as another, and it may not be so crowded at the Ritz.

BETTY. But I like the music here. (*Crosses to Tom*) Do you suppose it would do any good if we saw the Maitre d'Hotel?

TOM. (*Playing GERTRUDE's game*) I have seen him.

BETTY. Did you try tipping him?

TOM. (*Sarcastically*) Not only tried—but succeeded.

(WAITER enters up c. from L. and comes to down R. C.)

BETTY. (*Disappointedly*) Oh, what a nuisance! I shan't come here again!

WAITER. Mr. Robinson?

TOM. Yes?

WAITER. Beg pardon, sir—your table is ready.

(TOM is caught in a lie.)

BETTY. (*To WAITER, with surprise, goes up-stage a step*) Oh, have you found one?

WAITER. Yes, Madame. It has been waiting for some time.

BETTY. (*Accusingly, to Tom*) I thought you said——?

TOM. (*Lightly*) Upon my word I didn't know it. (*To WAITER*) All right. All right. We'll be there in a moment.

(WAITER bows and exits up c. off to L.)

BETTY. (*Indignantly,—crossing to table down R.*) Gertie! Why didn't you want me to have my tea here?

(*TOM stands below table L.*)

GERTRUDE. My dear, I really thought—

BETTY. (*Sharply—cutting her off*) Don't fib! It's a put-up job between you. (*Takes TOM in*)

GERTRUDE. (*Below table down R.*) Well, as a matter of fact, Tom has heard that Harry is expected.

BETTY. (*Indignantly*) Ah! I told you that woman was waiting for him!

GERTRUDE. (*Easily*) We naturally thought you'd prefer to go somewhere else.

BETTY. Indeed. That's just what they'd like me to do, I suppose! But I'll not do any such thing! (*Turns C.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Taking a step C.*) But, Betty——!

BETTY. (*Crosses to TOM*) I'm going to have my tea here, if I have to sit alone! (*PAGE enters from off R. goes down C. and to up R. C. HARRY enters with PAGE from off R. U. goes down C. to L. C. BETTY turns up-stage to exit, but pauses as she almost bumps into HARRY*)

HARRY. (*With pleased surprise, his hand out*) Hullo, Betty! (*BETTY goes back a step, tosses head, exits R. of screen and off up C. to R. HARRY is hurt. smiles, and steps toward GERTRUDE*) Gertrude—(*GERTRUDE tosses head and exits R. of screen, beckoning to TOM as she exits up C. and off to R. TOM gets cue from GERTRUDE, backs L. a step, so that he can go up L. of table down L. HARRY turns to TOM, with hand extended*) Hullo, Tom—(*TOM imitates girls in his exit L. of screen and off up C. and to R. HARRY stops, at a loss, then tosses hat to seat before screen and turns R.*)

PAGE. I guess she's in the coat-room.

HARRY. That's all right. (*To table down R., giving PAGE a coin*) Here you are.

PAGE. Thanks. (*Exits up L. of screen and off up C.*)

(*TOM re-enters from R., up C. in arch, backing to L. of screen. HARRY on giving coin to PAGE, goes R. of table down R. looks off into coat-room down R.*)

TOM. (*Taking C., eagerly*) Harry! (*Looking off up R. a moment*)

HARRY. (*Easily,—down R.*) Ah!—Regained your power of speech, eh?

TOM. (*Anxious to account for his attitude, but trying to avoid blaming GERTRUDE*) Well—I'm not altogether to blame for losing it just now! You see, when a fellow is married, as I am, and his wife happens to be the best friend of the other party—

HARRY. I understand. (*Crossing front to table down L.*) Domestic peace at any price. You needn't apologize.

TOM. (*Down C. a step, with emphasis*) I'm not apologizing. I only wanted to tell you that I've just seen—(*HARRY pauses L. of table down L. and faces TOM. TOM looks toward down R. entrance, taking HATTIE in*) Well—(*Facing HARRY, indicating R. E. 1*) You know. She's waiting for you.

HARRY. (*Casually*) Oh, you mean Miss King. (*Goes below table L.*)

TOM. Yes. (*Making it out the most terrible thing that could happen*) Betty saw her, too!

HARRY. Yes, I guessed as much, from the way Betty looked at me. (*Sits R. of table down L.*)

TOM. (*Moment's pause, then, emphatically*) Why do you do it, old man?—Surely there are plenty of other women—?

HARRY. (*Lightly, quickly, as if dismissing subject*) I can't ask any decent girl to be seen with me until after the divorce is granted, can I?

TOM. But—why any woman?

HARRY. (*Gloomily, quickly, anxious to avoid subject*) Because I'm not fit company for any man in my present frame of mind, and I can't stand being alone: I bore myself to death. (*Rises and goes L.*)

TOM. (*Insistently, R. a couple steps in despair, then facing HARRY*) But don't you see that you're getting yourself in wrong with this girl? Everybody knows what her business is, and—and now that you're being seen with her—(*Walks toward table down R.*) Well, take my advice, old man—and shake her—right now. (*Throws newspaper on table*)

HARRY. (*L.*) Couldn't if I wanted to.

TOM. (*Turning to face HARRY*) Why not?

HARRY. She doesn't get her fee until after the divorce is granted.

TOM. (*Sharply*) Whose idea is that?

HARRY. (*Tired of the subject*) My lawyer's! Says it wouldn't do to pay her until the work is finished. Talks about being in a woman's power—collusion, and all that sort of thing. (*Wearily turns up to window L.*)

TOM. (*Coming c.—sincerely*) By Jove, old fellow, I hate to see you letting yourself go to the devil like this!

HARRY. (*Wearily, going above table down L.*) Oh, it's all right for you to talk, but if you were in my place, you'd be doing the same thing. (*Turns c. as though to get hat on seat before screen. DICK enters up c. from off L. Comes down to L. of screen, and meets HARRY face to face. Pause. HARRY is tense an instant*) Oh! (*Ejaculation of disgust, then turns to window L.*)

DICK. (*With kid-face and snarl*) Ar-h—
(*Turns to TOM*) Hello, Tom!

TOM. Hello, Dick. (*Surprise at seeing him*)

DICK. Where are the girls? (*With a step toward TOM*)

TOM. What are you doing away from your office at this time of day?

DICK. (*Casually, taking legal papers from pocket*) I want my sister to sign these papers. I've arranged for the sale of the 76th Street house. (*Looks at HARRY, not anticipating refusal*) By the way—I need your signature, too.

HARRY. (*Sarcastically, down to below table*) Do you? Trying to bleed Betty for some more money!

DICK. (*Nastily, but not shouting, taking a couple steps L.*) That's none of your business! It isn't pleasant for me to have to talk to you at all, but you're still my sister's husband and your signature is needed for the transfer. (*Turns R.*)

HARRY. (*Sharply, decisively*) You don't get it!

DICK. (*Sings line,—superior attitude*) Oh, very well, then, I'll wait until the divorce is granted and it won't be necessary. (*Crosses toward TOM at c.*)

TOM. (*Easily*) I didn't know that Betty wanted to sell her house?

HARRY. What does he care what Betty wants as long as he can get a few thousands out of her?

DICK. (*Sharply, after crossing toward HARRY*) It's not your money!

HARRY. No, but it's Betty's! You had your share before your father died. He showed his good sense when he left you to shift for yourself. (*TOM goes quietly up-stage between them. HARRY continues*) And if Betty had listened to me——

DICK. (*With sarcasm*) If Betty had listened to you, I suppose you'd have had it all!

HARRY. Do you think I wanted your sister's

money? Why, I could buy and sell you both—twice over.

DICK. (*Chortling*) Maybe you'd like me to tell her that?

HARRY. And you're just the kind that would! Why, for two cents—! (*Starts toward Dick*)

(DICK clenches fists, with movement toward HARRY.)

TOM. (*Quickly separating them*) Here!—Now! (*Ad lib, quieting them*) Look here, old man, this is supposed to be a quiet hotel.

DICK. Let him rave. We'll soon be rid of him.

HARRY. You young pup! There never would have been a divorce if it hadn't been for you! (*To Tom*) He put Betty up to it.

DICK. (*Importantly, highly moral*) As Betty's lawyer it was my duty to give her the benefit of my legal advice.

HARRY. (*Quiet disgust*) And who made you a lawyer? I did. And how do you repay me? The first thing you do after being admitted to the bar is to practise on me.

DICK. (*Momentarily at a loss*) Well—(*Voices first excuse he can think of*) That's your misfortune.

TOM. (*Crossing to DICK, in mild reproach*) It does seem ungrateful, Dick.

HARRY. (*Lightly—front*) What does he know about gratitude?

DICK. (*Angrily crossing to HARRY*) I know enough about you to get Betty an interlocutory decree!

HARRY. (*Casually*) Conceited ass! It's probably the only case you'll ever have.

DICK. Is that so?

HARRY. (*Too full for utterance*) Oh—(*Turns up L. in disgust*)

DICK. Hah! (*With childish nasty ejaculation, turns to TOM*) Where'd you say Betty was?

TOM. They're in the tea-room.

DICK. (*Up L. c., sticks out chin at HARRY*) Hah! (*HARRY with angry ejaculation starts for DICK. DICK quickly exits in alarm off up c. to R.*)

HARRY. (*Up L. c. struggling for utterance*) Ooh! I never hated anybody so hard in all my life! (*Coming down toward TOM*) Do you wonder that I refused to live in the same house with him?

TOM. (*Getting information—indicating DICK*) O—oh! Was that the cause of your quarrel?

HARRY. (*Rapidly*) It was the culmination of it. I simply couldn't stand the way he was bleeding Betty, and when she insisted on his living with us, well—(*Moving L. toward table*) That was the finish.

TOM. Why didn't you reason with Betty?

HARRY. (*Turns to face TOM*) Reason with her! (*Crosses to TOM*) Have you ever tried to reason with a woman who has made up her mind to feel injured?

TOM. (*Soberly, looks down R. taking in GERTRUDE, turns front*) Not with any conspicuous success.

HARRY. (*Hopelessly*) When a woman keeps telling you how unhappy she is, and what a fearful mistake she made in marrying you—Well, the only decent thing is to try and rectify the mistake, and make her as happy as you can. (*To L. of table down L. pacing up and down*)

TOM. By Jove, old man, I had no idea it was like that. I thought it was because you didn't care?

HARRY. (*Quietly, rapidly, convincingly*) Didn't care! Didn't ca—(*Crosses to TOM*) I was mad about her, I still am, for that matter, but—Oh, well, what's the use of discussing it now? She's happier for being away from me—(*To chair R. of table*)

down L.) and that's the principal thing. (*Sits R. of table L.*)

TOM. (*Convincingly*) She's not happy! (*Toward HARRY*) I think you've both made a big mistake. Now, I've an idea! (*Pointedly*) You're having tea here with Miss King, aren't you?

HARRY. Don't worry. We won't stay now, of course.

TOM. (*Crossing to HARRY*) You've got to stay.

HARRY. (*Surprised*) What?

TOM. (*Eagerly, quickly, impressing the point on HARRY*) If you happened to get a table quite close to us, where Betty couldn't help seeing you both—

HARRY. (*Dismissing the idea—rapidly*) No, no, old man, I'm not quite as bad as all that.

TOM. (*Insistently*) But, don't you see? If she makes a row about it, it will prove that she cares. If she doesn't—

HARRY. (*Rising, and going down a step*) Thanks, but it's quite impossible.

(*HATTIE enters down R., pauses just below, R. of table, watching them.*)

TOM. (*Ad lib*) But I tell you—

HARRY. (*Seeing HATTIE, silencing TOM*) Ssh—Ssh. (*Indicating HATTIE*)

TOM. (*Sees HATTIE, moment's pause, then down to HARRY, sotto voce*) Think it over, old man. I'm sure it's worth trying. (*Turns R. a step, starts back, seeing HATTIE, goes up L. C., keeping HATTIE in view and exits up C. and off R.*)

HATTIE. (*Impatiently, slowly*) So—you've finally decided to keep your appointment?

HARRY. (*Sincerely, crossing to C.*) I'm sorry. I didn't know you were waiting.

HATTIE. Nearly an hour. I felt horribly humiliated. Before all your friends, too!

HARRY. Too bad. Get your coat and we'll go.

(Turns up c. and gets hat from seat before screen)

HATTIE. (Surprise,—with rebellion manifest)
Go? Where?

HARRY. (Conciliatingly) Any place you like.

HATTIE. What's the matter with this place?

HARRY. (Easily) I prefer the Waldorf.

HATTIE. Well, you certainly are the limit!

HARRY. One place is as good as another. My car is outside. It will only take a couple of minutes to drive down.

HATTIE. (Sings) What! And let those people give me the laugh? I should say not! (Facing front with determination)

HARRY. What people?

HATTIE. (Facing HARRY) You know very well that your wife is here.

HARRY. Well, what of it?

HATTIE. Tom Robinson asked you to take me somewhere else. (HARRY starts to deny it. (Quickly) Now, don't deny it! He asked me, and I said I wouldn't go.

HARRY. (Crossing to HATTIE,—gently) You were wrong. It's the only decent thing for us to do.

HATTIE. (With determination) I'm going to stay here, just the same.

HARRY. (Going up-stage to L. end of table down R.) Now, don't make me think I'm mistaken in you. I've got you down for a fairly sensible girl, and I'd be awfully disappointed if you turned out anything else.

(Start one-step.)

HATTIE. (Turning down R.) Well, you needn't think I'm different from any other woman just because I'm paid for going around with you. (Faces HARRY) Will you take me in or shall I go alone?

HARRY. (Pause) Very well—but if anything happens—

PAGE. (*Off up c. to L.*) Mrs. Harrington, please.

HATTIE. (*Going up R.*) If anything happens I won't get the worst of it, you can depend on that. (*Exits to R. of screen and off c. to R.*)

HARRY. (*Follows HATTIE off. Ad lib*) I know, but, Miss King—etc.

(MAID enters from down R. Goes up R. and arranges chair, comes down to L. of table down R. picks up newspaper.)

PAGE. (*Enters up c. from off R. goes down L. of screen*) Mrs. Harrington, please. (MAID stands front of table down R., opening paper to financial page. PAGE stops on seeing MAID; crosses toward her interestedly) That the Wall Street edition?

MAID. Yes. (*Looking at paper*)

PAGE. (*Looking over MAID's shoulder at paper*) How's Interborough?

MAID. (*Looks at paper*) Off—two points. (*Exits down R., leaving paper with PAGE*)

PAGE. (*Taking paper as MAID leaves*) Gee, I knew I was on a dead one. (*Whining voice, looking at paper, quietly and from force of habit*) Mrs. Harrington, please! Mrs. Harrington, please! (BETTY and GERTRUDE, voices highly pitched, talk ad lib off R. up c. PAGE, awakening to work, starts up R. in full voice, taking paper with him) Mrs. Harrington, please! (*And exits R. of screen up c. and off to L.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Entering from off R. up c. comes down L. of screen, with BETTY. Impatiently, reasonably*) Betty, you're acting like a school girl. Where's your pride?

BETTY. (*Sotto voce as she enters*) I could have stood almost anything else, but to have them sit down at the very next table to us—(*Faces GER-*

TRUDE) To flaunt that shameless creature right in my face. No. I'll never forgive him for that—never.

GERTRUDE. (*Soothingly*) It may have been an accident.

BETTY. An accident! After they had both seen me here—in this very room! (*Crosses R. to table*)

GERTRUDE. Well, they couldn't have known at what table we were going to sit. (*To c.*)

BETTY. (*Below table down R., facing GERTRUDE*) They did. She was grinning like a Cheshire cat! (*Almost beside herself—but not loud, only intensely*) Oh!—I could just scream with vexation. (*Crosses to entrance down R., turns to face GERTRUDE*) Where are the coat-checks?

GERTRUDE. I gave them to Tom.

BETTY. (*Impatiently, going L. a couple of steps*) Where is he?

GERTRUDE. He stayed to settle with the waiter. (*BETTY tosses head impatiently, crossing L. three steps*) Now, listen, Betty! (*Toward BETTY. BETTY, impatiently crossing GERTRUDE to table down L. Continuing*) I'm not holding any brief for Harry, but it's just possible you misjudge him—and, don't you see, even if it were intentional—

BETTY. (*Interrupting*) Of course, it was intentional!

GERTRUDE. Then I wouldn't give either of them the satisfaction of having driven me away. (*Stops front at c.*)

(*Stop music.*)

BETTY. (*Faces GERTRUDE, heart-broken, almost in tears*) I thought you were my friend, at least! (*Sinks into chair R. of table down L.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Reasoningly, toward BETTY*) Betty, I am your friend, and that's why I won't let you

do anything so silly! After all, this is a public place and he has just as much right to come here as we have.

BETTY. (*Facing front, almost voicing her thought*) He needn't have brought that woman with him. (*Faces L.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Dawning realization,—smile,—drawing away*) Oh—! Betty, I believe you're jealous!

BETTY. (*High voice*) Jealous?—Of that?—Hah! (*Tosses head*)

GERTRUDE. Then why are you so upset?

BETTY. (*Very much upset*) I'm not upset! I'm just—just—(*Pause, breaks into tears*) Oh, I wish I were dead! (*Head in hands on table L.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Insisting, as conviction grows*) Yes—you're still in love with Harry Lindsey.

BETTY. (*Rises, indignantly, facing GERTRUDE*) Oh! How dare you say such a thing! I've told you over and over again that I hate him! I despise him! He's spoiled my whole life for me. I did think that you would sympathize with me, but I see now that I haven't any friends at all. (*Crosses to near entrance down R.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Following BETTY R., pausing just L. of table R.*) But, Betty—!

BETTY. (*Wheeling to face GERTRUDE*) I won't discuss the silly thing any more! I'm sick to death of the whole business. I'm going away—to Europe—or the Fiji Islands—where I hope never to hear his name again! (*Exits down R.*)

TOM. (*Enters with pent-up anger, up c. from off R. in time to catch "Fiji Islands"—comes down L. of screen and to c. holds*) Where is she going?

GERTRUDE. To the Fiji Islands. (*Crosses to TOM*) Have you the checks?

TOM. (*Impatiently passes coat-checks to GERTRUDE to front, in comedy rage*) This is a nice business! Upon my word, I never felt so much like

an idiot in all my life! (*To below table down L.*) I've had enough of this tea-thing!

GERTRUDE. (*Holding—looking at down R., taking BETTY in. Sings line*) Tom—(*TOM looks at GERTRUDE*) I'm afraid we've made a terrible mistake.

TOM. How do you mean?

GERTRUDE. In encouraging Betty to get that divorce. (*Pause, still looking R.*) She's still in love with Harry.

TOM. (*Crossing toward GERTRUDE three steps*) And Harry is still in love with her.

GERTRUDE. (*Facing TOM, in surprise*) Oh! How do you know?

TOM. He told me so not a minute ago. Said they'd have been perfectly happy if Dick hadn't butted into their affairs.

GERTRUDE. (*Impatiently crossing to TOM, shaking hands at him*) Why didn't you tell me this before?

TOM. (*Imitating GERTRUDE's business*) Because—I didn't know it before!

GERTRUDE. (*At a loss, anxiously, turns R. a step, and decides*) Well—(*Joyfully*) We must bring them together again!

TOM. Fine—but how are you going to do it?

GERTRUDE. (*Taking command*) You run and get Harry. I'll keep Betty here until he comes. Hurry! (*Turns R. as though to exit*)

TOM. (*Keyed up, at a loss*) What'll I tell him?

GERTRUDE. (*Impatiently, turning to face TOM*) Say—that Betty wants to see him. (*Turns R.*)

TOM. But she doesn't.

GERTRUDE. (*Impatiently, crossing to TOM*) She does—but she doesn't know it. Remember—Dick isn't to know anything about this until the matter is settled. Hurry, now. (*Turns R.*)

TOM. (*Up a step c., turns quickly*) Wait a mo-

ment. (GERTRUDE *faces TOM in disgust*) What excuse can I make to the other lady for taking Harry away from her?

GERTRUDE. (*Just L. of table R.—deadly calm*) Well—I've never known you to be at a loss for an excuse before.

(DICK *enters up c. from off R. and down to L. screen hurriedly.*)

TOM. (*Singing line disgustedly and turning up toward L. of screen*) Oh, all right. (*Almost bumps into DICK. DICK stops. TOM comedy fall, back to rear chair down L. Fatuously*) Hello, Dick!

(GERTRUDE *turns to face them, and comes c. a little.*)

DICK. (*Sharply*) Where did my sister go?

TOM. (*Confused,—smiling*) Oh, you mean Betty?

DICK. Of course.

(TOM *is at a loss.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Rescuing TOM*) I think—she went back to the apartment. (*Slower on last of above line*)

DICK. (*Taking c.*) What for?

(TOM *goes below chair down L. relieved.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Lightly*) Well—she was rather upset—and——

DICK. (*Interrupting*) I don't wonder. How that fellow can have the gall to bring a notorious woman into a place like this—beats me!

TOM. (*Soothingly*) It may not have been a'together his fault.

DICK. I tell you, he's no good! (*Toward Tom a little*) He knew that my sister was there, and yet he deliberately planked that woman down alongside of her.

PAGE. (*Off up c. to R.*) Mr. Giffen, please!

GERTRUDE. Well, I think you'd better run after her, Dick.

PAGE. (*Off up c. to R.*) Mr. Giffen, please!

GERTRUDE. (*Continuing*) You know Betty when she gets upset.

DICK. (*Thinks an instant*) Yes. Perhaps I had. She might need me.

PAGE. (*Entering up c. from R. Comes down to L. screen*) Mr. Giffen, please!

DICK. Here, boy! Here, boy!

PAGE. (*Pausing*) Mr. Giffen?

DICK. Yes. (*Sharply, with hand out*)

PAGE. (*Crossing to DICK, extending card-tray with right hand*) Telephone call, sir. (*DICK takes call from salver, and looks at it. PAGE shifts tray to left hand and extends right for tip*)

DICK. (*Seeing action*) All right! All right! (*Slaps boy's hand. PAGE exits L. of screen and off up c. to L. DICK reads call, and says importantly*) It's from my office. I'll see what they want. Then I'll run over to the apartment and join Betty. See you later. (*Exits L. of screen up c., and off to L.*)

TOM and GERTRUDE. (*In unison*) So-long! Bye-bye, Dick! (*Pause*)

TOM. (*Plants himself facing GERTRUDE, triumphantly*) Don't ever accuse me of not telling the truth!

GERTRUDE. (*Off-handedly*) It was necessary— to get him out of the way. (*Crossing to Tom quickly*) The principal thing now is to bring Betty and Harry together before he gets back. Run and get Harry!

BETTY and MAM. (*Ad lib., off down R.*) Hurry!

(GERTRUDE *pushes TOM up c., and turns facing down R. TOM goes L. of screen exits up c. and off to R.*)

BETTY (*Impatiently—off down R.*) You silly girl! Don't you imagine I know my own coat when I see it! (*Entering, holding on to coat*) You won't gain anything by being disagreeable!

MAID. (*Entering down R. after BETTY, holding on to coat*) I'd rather lose the tip than lose my job.

GERTRUDE. (*At L. upper end of table down R.*) What's the matter, Betty?

BETTY. This silly girl thinks I'm trying to steal my own coat!

MAID. Begging your pardon, Miss, I only want the check for it.

BETTY. You had it, Gertrude. (*Pulls coat away from MAID and crosses to chair down L.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Takes checks out and comes down R. to MAID*) Yes, here it is. I don't know which is which.

MAID. (*Sorting checks*) This one, ma'am. Do you want the other coat, too?

GERTRUDE. If you please.

MAID. Yes, ma'am. (*Exits down R.*)

BETTY. (*Throwing coat on chair-back L. angrily*) I've never had anyone so insolent to me before! Where's Tom?

GERTRUDE. (*Moving L., below table down R.*) He'll be here in a moment. I sent him on an errand. (*TOM and HARRY enter from R. up c. and L. of screen—bringing HARRY on rapidly just as GERTRUDE finishes. Pause down L. c. BETTY faces front, pettishly, below table L. GERTRUDE pretending great surprise*) Why, Har-ry! (*Stops an instant*) I am so glad to see you!

HARRY. (*At a loss, blankly*) Are you?

(Tom is all smiles.)

GERTRUDE. (*Crossing to HARRY*) Of course, you silly boy! Where have you been all this while?

TOM. (*Enthusiastically beaming, to BETTY*) Picked him up in the tea-room. Thought you'd like to take a look at him. (*GERTRUDE and TOM link arms with HARRY—all smiles, starting with L. foot come down three steps toward BETTY, taking each step on word from GERTRUDE*)

GERTRUDE. Bet-ty—(*Step*) here's—(*Step*) Har-ry. (*Step and stops expectantly*)

BETTY. (*Slight pause, coldly*) So I see. (*She remains distant*)

(*Trio are disappointed. Slight pause.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Coaxing rebuke*) Aren't you going to speak to him?

BETTY. (*Spitefully*) I don't think we have anything to say to each other. (*Putting on gloves*)—Hadn't you better get your coat?

GERTRUDE. (*Flat, turning R. a little*) Oh, the girl will be here with it directly.

(*HARRY turns up C. to go. TOM, ad lib., holding at his left.*)

HARRY. (*Sotto voce*) I thought you said she wanted to see me?

TOM. (*Urgently*) Now, don't lose your nerve! (*Works to R. of HARRY*) See it through. (*Crosses above GERTRUDE by table down R. stops, smiling at duo*)

(*GERTRUDE facing them, is at a loss as to outcome.*)

BETTY. Perhaps—perhaps Tom will see me to the car? (*Takes up coat, turns R.*)

HARRY. (*Stepping toward BETTY*) Just a minute, please. If you don't mind, I would like a word or two.

BETTY. (*Coldly—facing HARRY*) Well?

HARRY. (*Pantomime embarrassment, looks at BETTY, at duo, front, at duo, at BETTY, at duo*) If we could be alone——?

TOM. (*With smile,—exuberantly*) Certainly! Come, Gert! (*Starts up R. C.*)

GERTRUDE. I'll get my coat while you're talking. (*Turns R. below table*)

BETTY. (*Running across to GERTRUDE*) No, no, no! Don't leave me. (*Stops*)

HARRY. Please! I won't keep you a minute.

TOM. Eh? (*Pauses, facing HARRY*)

BETTY. (*Holding GERTRUDE*) I don't want to be alone with him.

GERTRUDE. You can't refuse such a slight request, dear? Be fair. (*Breaks into pantomime talk*)

(*BETTY pantomimes to GERTRUDE.*)

HARRY. (*Sotto voce at c.*) Tom! Tom! (*Beckons him. TOM down to HARRY at c. inquiringly. Sotto voce, rapidly*) You know the orchestra leader here. Get him to play the Barcarolle from "Tales of Hoffman!"

TOM. Why?

HARRY. Never mind why! Get him to do it! (*Wheels TOM up c. and pushes him off L. of screen then to R. C. up-stage*)

GERTRUDE. (*As TOM exits*) Like a good girl. I'll be only a minute. (*Exits down R., and closes door*)

(*TOM exits off to R. up c. BETTY stands facing R. a moment, then turns front. HARRY quietly*)

works to R. upper end table R. in readiness to catch BETTY either way she goes. BETTY looks stealthily L., then turns R. to exit. HARRY quickly steps between BETTY and R. I.)

BETTY. (*Stops an instant, and assumes dignity*) Well?

HARRY. (*Quietly, sincerely*) In the first place, I want to explain how I came to be here, and to apologize for what has just happened.

BETTY. (*Casually*) Why apologize? It doesn't matter to me in the least.

HARRY. It doesn't matter? I don't want you to think I'm that kind of a rotter. If I'd the slightest idea that you were going to be here——

BETTY (*Sarcastically—moving to L. of table*) Don't you think your lady friend will be growing impatient?

HARRY. (*Impulsively*) Oh, hang my lady friend! (*Crossing to BETTY*) You know very well that I'm not thinking of her.

BETTY. (*Sarcastically, going c.*) One would naturally suppose that you thought of her a great deal—from the way you—cling to her. (*Glove business throughout*)

HARRY. Cling—I'm not clinging to her! I'd have cut her out long ago if I'd known that you cared.

BETTY. (*Facing HARRY*) I don't care.

HARRY. (*Toward BETTY*) Then why do you insist on discussing her?

BETTY. You flatter yourself. I have no interest in the lady beyond a certain amount of consideration for any woman left alone in a crowded tea-room.

HARRY. (*Turning front, smiling*) She's able to take care of herself, I guess.

BETTY. Oh! That's what I might have expected you to say!

HARRY. Well, what do you want me to say?

BETTY. (*In surprise*) I?—I don't want you to say anything. (*Pause*) It was you who insisted on talking to me. (*Pause*) Well, if you have quite finished—(*L. to below table*)

HARRY. (*Holds*) Finished? I haven't begun. You haven't given me half a chance.

BETTY. (*Wearily—into chair down L.*) Very well.

HARRY. (*Crosses to rear of BETTY's chair*) So far as Miss King is concerned, you know very well that it's purely business.

BETTY. Indeed? I've never heard it put so sordidly before.

HARRY. She was engaged with your consent and approval.

BETTY. That was before I'd seen her.

HARRY. Well, I'll never see her again. I'll have my lawyer write her a letter, and end the whole thing. And I'll do anything else you want me to do.

BETTY. I wonder if Gertrude is ready yet—? (*Rises*)

HARRY. (*Coming down to her R., reasoning*) For God's sake, Betty—give your better self a chance. If there is any hope of our ever getting together again——

BETTY. (*Facing HARRY*) So! That's the scheme, is it? That's how Gertrude and Tom are planning to betray me!

HARRY. (*Soothingly*) You're wrong, Gertrude and Tom have had nothing to do with it. It's all myself. I refuse to be satisfied with present conditions. And—and I've been hoping against hope that you might feel the same way.

BETTY. (*Facing HARRY*) Then—you—had—better—stop—hoping right now. You and I are nothing to each other and never can be.

HARRY. (*Pleadingly*) Betty——

BETTY. (*Facing front, miserably. She would*

like to, yet pride keeps her from giving in) You've no right to place me in this position—just as I have my mind all prepared for a divorce.

HARRY. (*Delightedly*) Aha, then you're not satisfied, either!

BETTY. (*Facing HARRY*) On the contrary—I am perfectly satisfied—as long as you keep to your part of the bargain.

HARRY. (*Taking a step toward BETTY*) What was my part of the bargain?

BETTY. Never to annoy me or give me further cause for unhappiness.

HARRY. (*Feelingly*) But I can't help speaking to you—can I? I'm still awfully in love with you. I can't help that either, can I? Betty—won't you give me another chance?

BETTY. (*Almost relents, then facing front*) I can't forget all the horrid things you've said to me.

HARRY. I apologize for every one of them.

BETTY. (*Almost relents*) After what I've seen to-day I could never trust you again—never.

HARRY. But I've just explained all about that. It never would have happened in the first place if it hadn't been for your brother.

BETTY. (*Slight pause, then wheeling toward HARRY*) There you go! Always blaming it on poor Dick!

HARRY. I want you to know how this whole thing happened. Nothing ever happened when we were alone. On our honeymoon, abroad—at Wildwood, when we returned—we were perfectly happy and contented. Weren't we? (*Pause*) It was only after we came to New York that it all started; because we had your brother—(*BETTY starts to speak. Quickly*)—and our friends, around us. Think of every quarrel we've ever had—and there's always been a third party to start it.

BETTY. Well, we can't go through the world alone: one must have friends.

HARRY. It isn't necessary to have our friends live with us. Don't you see, Betty—that's where we made our mistake. We've been a couple of fools—

BETTY. (*Sharply*) Speak for yourself!

HARRY. (*Quickly agreeing*) All right, then—I've been a fool. I admit it, cheerfully. I should have known that you loved me.

BETTY. I don't love you. (*Facing HARRY*)

HARRY. At any rate I'm in love with you. And more desperately than ever. Give me another chance to prove it. See—(*Kneels L. c.*) You've got me on my knees. What more can I do, or say?

(*Start Barcarolle.*)

BETTY. (*Quickly, gesturing with hands*) Get up! Get up! Someone might see you. (*Crosses to table down R.*)

HARRY. (*On knees, blurts it out*) I don't care if the whole world sees me! I love you!

BETTY. (*Almost tearfully, facing front*) You're taking advantage of me because you know I'm sentimental. (*Sits on chair L. of table down R.*)

HARRY. (*Hears music, looks off up R., rises to c. —gently*) Betty. Listen. (*Pause*) Do you hear what they're playing?

(*Increase music.*)

BETTY. What? (*Listens*)

HARRY. The Barcarolle. (*Pause*) Doesn't it bring back memories?

(*Music PP.*)

BETTY. (*Aloof*) What—memories?

HARRY. (*Tenderly, drawing picture of past,*

front just L. and above BETTY) Monte Carlo.—Our honeymoon. We were sitting on the terrace—In the gorgeous sunshine—Looking out over the blue Mediterranean. Back of us—the Alps.—With their snow-crowned peaks. And across the way—In the Café de Paris—The orchestra was playing that same music. (*Pause*) Remember? (*BETTY starts to look at HARRY, realizes she is about to give in, starts to speak pettishly. HARRY quickly, to get her back into proper mood*) And before that! (*Exuberantly*) The motor ride over the Grande Corniche.—Up in the clouds—Then the little white palace at Cape Martin—where we stopped for tea—

BETTY. (*Losing herself in past memory, joyously*) And we went into the Casino to gamble!

HARRY. (*Playing on her mood*) Yes. And you bet a Louis on the 18—because it was the date on which we were married.

BETTY. (*To HARRY*) And I won.

HARRY. Yes. And then we went out on the terrace where we heard them—(*As BETTY said it*) “shooting the poor little pigeons.”

BETTY. (*Facing front, seeing it again*) And I was so glad when some of them got away—even without their tails.

HARRY. Wasn't it wonderful? (*Poetically*)

BETTY. (*Dreamily, facing front*) It's like a dream.

HARRY. (*Entire change, has her in mood, pointedly*) And—do you remember what you said when we turned back toward the hotel?

BETTY. (*Dreamily, with a smile*) No.

HARRY. (*Matter-of-fact*) You said—no matter what the future had in store for us, that one day—had paid for everything. (*Leans slowly toward BETTY*)

BETTY. (*Turns slowly toward HARRY, stops, facing front*) It isn't fair to remind me of that!

HARRY. (*Drops to knee, taking her hands which are on table and plays into passionate, repressed, tense, love-scene*) I'm only trying to remind you that we were happy—once. And we can be just as happy—again. The sunshine is still there. The blue sea. The Grande Corniche. Even the bench on the terrace. It's all waiting for us. Why can't we go back to it? It means happiness, for us both! (*Pause*) Will you come? (*BETTY pauses, rises and goes a step R. HARRY holding her hands, pivoting her to face him. Pause. BETTY lets hands slowly fall to side. HARRY extends hands. BETTY raises her hands. Pause, then she starts toward him*)

(*Stop music instantly.*)

(*BETTY and HARRY stop an instant, their faces almost touching.*)

BETTY. (*Steps back*) No. I can't trust you. (*Crosses quickly to window L.*)

HARRY. (*Stops*) Damn it all! Why couldn't they have played that music a minute longer! (*Decisively crosses L. c.*) See here! I'm not going to give you up so easily! You know I love you—and you love me!

BETTY. (*To avoid HARRY, comes below table down L.*) I haven't said so.

HARRY. (*Quickly down to BETTY at her R. Rapidly, taking her off her feet*) Not in so many words, but I know you do. You're my wife and I want you to stay my wife! (*Holds her hands*) Give me another chance! Call this divorce thing off! Let's go away together.

BETTY. (*Hurriedly*) Oh, no!

HARRY. (*Rapidly*) If you don't want to go abroad, we'll go to Wildwood!

BETTY. No, no, I couldn't.

HARRY. Don't you love me—a little bit?

BETTY. That has nothing to do with it.

HARRY. (*Joyfully*) Aha, then you do! You do love me. (*Taking her in arms. BETTY starts to speak*) Don't say a word! I know what you're going to say, and it's all right. Are you game?

(*TOM enters from R. up c. down, sees scene over screen—anxious at first.*)

BETTY. I don't know what you mean?

HARRY. For an elopement. Up the river to Wildwood. (*TOM all smiles exits up c. to R. HARRY continuing*) Without letting a soul know about it.

BETTY. When?

HARRY. Now! This minute. We can make it in a couple of hours! It'll be our second honeymoon.

BETTY. But I haven't any clothes.

HARRY. That's all right. We can stop at the apartment and get some. (*Takes her up-stage to L. of screen and off c. to L. ad lib.*)

BETTY. (*As he takes her off up c.*) Oh, Harry! But I must tell Gertrude something—They won't know what to think! (*Ad lib., and off*)

TOM. (*Slight pause. Enters off R. watching off L., all smiles, goes quickly R. of screen and down to door down R., opens it and calls off*) Gert! Oh, Gert. (*Crosses quickly toward window L.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Entering down R. eagerly, in time to stop TOM c. with line*) Have they gone?

TOM. (*At c.—turns to GERTRUDE, exuberantly*) Yes. They've made it up. It's all right. They've eloped. A second honeymoon. By Jove—(*Crosses to window L. looks off, beaming*)

GERTRUDE. (*To c. eagerly*) Did you hear where they were going?

TOM. (*Facing GERTRUDE*) Yes. To Harry's bungalow, at Wildwood. (*Turns to window*)

GERTRUDE. Well, what do you think of that!

TOM. (*Pause, beaming out window L.*) There they go. Off to the woods, like two babes, looking for the leaves to cover them. (*Turns heartily to GERTRUDE, crossing to her*) By Jove, Gert, this is the best day's work we've ever done. (*Right hand at side, looking out window L.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Pause, backs against TOM, takes his hand, facing R. romantically*) Tom. Do you know, I almost wish that we were going off on a trip like that!

TOM. (*Matter-of-fact*) Nonsense! We haven't had anything to eat yet.

GERTRUDE. (*Dropping TOM's hand to R. back to earth*) Oh, of course—you would spoil it for me.

TOM. (*Excusingly*) We've been married longer than they have.

GERTRUDE. What if we have! Do you suppose a woman is ever too old for romance? I might have known there wasn't a bit of it in your make-up!

TOM. (*At c. on the defence*) There isn't, eh? I'll tell you what I'll do. In spite of the fact that I'm hungry, I'll jump in a car with you, right now, and go as far as you want to go.

GERTRUDE. (*Sarcastically*) No, thank you! I don't care to romance with a man whose mind is on a chocolate cake. All you can do for me now is to buy me some tea!

TOM. Oh, well, if you want to be nasty about it—(*Turns L. and up-stage in circle*)

HATTIE. (*Enters off R. down c. to L. screen, facing TOM. Tartly*) Where's Harry Lindsey? What have you done with him? You came and got him for something—now, where is he?

TOM. (*At a loss, facing front*) Why, I—(*Lies like a man*) I don't know where he is. (*Stops, facing front*)

HATTIE. Oh, yes, you do. (*Indicating GERTRUDE*)
And so does she!

GERTRUDE. (*Haughtily*) I beg your pardon.

(*Warn curtain.*)

HATTIE. If you think that I'm going to be left at a tea-table without the money to pay the check, you're very much mistaken.

TOM. (*Conciliatory*) I'm sure Harry must have forgotten.

HATTIE. Oh, no! He didn't forget anything! It's a put-up job between you, and when I—(*Crossing to down R.*) see him I'll give him something to think about. (*Calls off down R.*) My coat, please!

TOM. (*Facing front, enjoying HATTIE's discomfiture*) You won't see him for some time. He's gone away with his wife.

HATTIE. Oh, ho! So that's the game, is it!

TOM. (*Laughing, facing front*) There's no law against a man's going away with his wife.

HATTIE. No, but there is against cheating me out of my fee!

TOM. (*Sharply, facing HATTIE*) Your fee?

HATTIE. One thousand dollars! That's what he owes me, and I'm not going to be cheated out of it.

GERTRUDE. How do you mean?

HATTIE. I was to wait until after the divorce was granted before he paid me. Now, of course, there ain't going to be a divorce. (*MAID enters down R. with coat ready for HATTIE*) He's made up with her! Just you wait till I catch up with him!

(*MAID exits down R.*)

TOM. (*Facing front, laughing*) You'll have some difficulty doing that. Harry has a speedy car.

HATTIE. (*Taking front on way to exit*) There are plenty of taxis!—thank goodness!

TOM. (*Laughing*) You'll find it rather expensive going that far in a taxi.

HATTIE. (*Holds c.; gets idea, points lines, watching TOM*) Oh—I don't mind the little trip to—Wildwood.

TOM. (*Startled, facing her*) How did you know he'd gone to Wildwood?

HATTIE. (*Triumphantly*) I didn't!—But I do now.

TOM. (*Quickly, going toward HATTIE*) No! No! You're wrong——

HATTIE. (*Triumphantly*) You've given it away, Mr. Robinson. (*Up L. of screen*) Me for Wildwood. (*Exits up c. and off to L.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Crossing impatiently to TOM down L. c.*) What did you want to tell her that for?

TOM. I didn't tell her. She guessed it!

DICK. (*Rushes on from L. up c. down to L. of screen between GERTRUDE and TOM*) See here, you people! (*Hit line and hold. GERTRUDE breaks R. a step, in shock. TOM breaks L. a step. DICK after laugh*) I want to know where my sister is.

GERTRUDE. Haven't you seen her? (*Pretending surprise*)

DICK. (*Sharply*) No, I haven't! I've been over to your place, and she hasn't been back since she left with you. Now, that was a very important telephone call and I've got to see her!

GERTRUDE. (*Easily*) You won't be able to see her to-day.

DICK. Why not?

TOM. (*With finality*) Now, look here, Dick! There's no sense your trying to stir things up any longer. (*A step toward DICK*) Betty and Harry have made it up.

DICK. What!

GERTRUDE. (*Satisfied with her work*) And they are now on their second honeymoon.

DICK. (*Aghast*) Impossible.

TOM. No. It's a fact. And if you really have your sister's interest at heart you won't attempt to find her.

DICK. I've got to find her. Where did they go?

GERTRUDE. (*Easily, smiling*) To Harry's bungalow at Wildwood.

DICK. Oh, my God! When did they leave?

TOM. Only a little while ago, but there's no use your trying to stop them. Harry has his Pierce-Arrow.

DICK. Haven't you got your Ford?

TOM. (*Hold for laugh*) Yes. But we couldn't overtake them if we wanted to!

DICK. (*Emphatically*) We must overtake them!

GERTRUDE and TOM. Why?

DICK. Their—final—decree—of—divorce—has just been granted.

GERTRUDE. (*Breaks front and R. a step. Shocked*) Divorced!

TOM. (*At same time—steps back a step, thunder-struck*) Final decree? Great Scott!

DICK. For God's sake, hurry, or she'll be a ruined woman. (*Goes up L. of screen off C. to L. ad libbing*)

TOM. (*Going up*) Come on, then!

GERTRUDE. (*Going up*) Oh, this is horrible!

TOM. (*As he and GERTRUDE exit C. and off to L.*) They're sure to take the Post Road! There's always the chance for an accident!

Curtain

Call 1—Whole company of Act I.

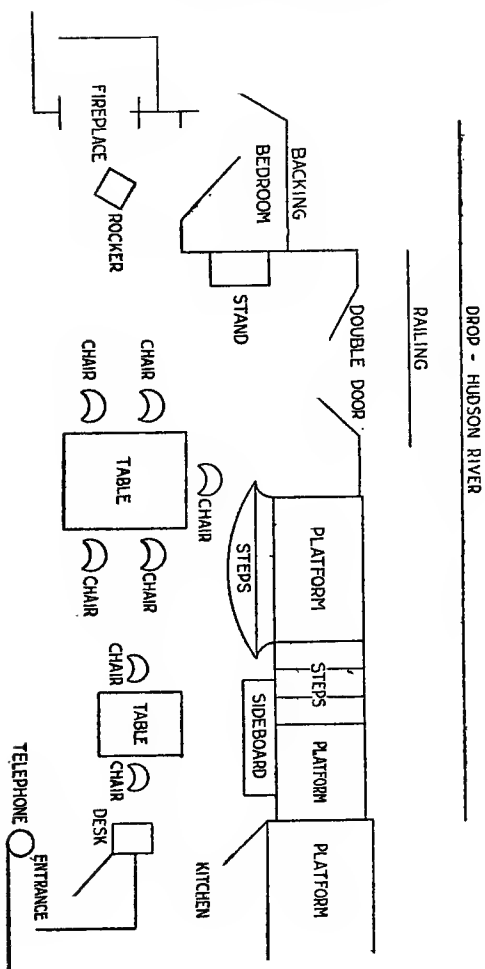
" 2—Gertrude—Tom—Harry—Betty.

" 3—Betty—Harry.

" 4—Whole company.

NEARLY MARRIED

DIAGRAM - ACTS 2 & 3



ACT II

SCENE: *The "Cherry Tree Inn," near Oscawana-on-Hudson, N. Y.*

TIME: *Evening of the same day.*

(Distant thunder heard.)

(RANJE discovered at rise, seated in chair by L. lower end of table c. facing front, reading a newspaper. His white coat hung over back of chair he is seated in, smokes lazily.)

NORAH. *(Off down L.)* Ranje!—Ranje!

RANJE. *(Lazily, stretching)* Yes, my darling.

NORAH. *(Just off down R. nearer)* Where the divil are you? *(Enters quickly down L. goes below table L. c. pauses. RANJE calmly smoking and reading newspaper. NORAH seeing him—impatiently)* Well, if he ain't hitting the pipe again! *(Crosses to RANJE)* Wake up, man! The landlord is coming.

RANJE. *(Lazily)* Meester Doo-lin?

NORAH. *(Impatiently)* Have we any other landlord? *(Taking stem of narghille from RANJE's mouth)* Here! *(Lifting narghille from floor)* Take that dope-stick out of your mouth, and give your brains a chance. *(Crossing above table c. with narghille and placing it on table up R.)* You'll need them for Doolin! *(Coming rear and down above RANJE L. c.)* Where's your coat?

RANJE. *(Taking coat from back of chair, lazily, fretfully)* I have eet.

NORAH. Put it on. *(Helping RANJE on with coat)* Remember that you're a Prince—and appearances go a long way.

RANJE. (*With dignity, rebukingly*) I have to'd you, many times, Norah, that I do not like to trade on my title. (*Turns R. a couple of steps*)

NORAH. (*Front down L. C. turning to RANJE, pointedly*) You got me in trade for it, didn't ye!

RANJE. (*Gives NORAH a look, frowns. Continuing*) Though God knows I got the worst of it!

(*Lightning up c.*)

RANJE. (*Indignantly*) Mrs. Ranje Boule—!

NORAH. Ssh!—Don't remind me of it! It's not a name to be proud of! (*Distant thunder up c.*) Pull down that window-shade! (*Indicating down R. C. front to RANJE, and herself stepping down L. C. reaching up and pulling down imaginary window-shade. RANJE down R. C. front and reaching up, pulls down an imaginary window-shade*) Have you got the lights hung up on the road?

RANJE. (*Surprise*) On a night like this?

NORAH. (*Pointing lines*) On a night like this it will be black as ink! And them red lamps will stop the wildest kind of automobile-drivers. And when they stop they'll be wanting a drink. So put 'em up, immediately. (*Turns up L. C.*)

RANJE. (*Disgustedly, doesn't want to go out; turns up a step, then, facing NORAH*) Well, where are the lan-terns?

NORAH. (*Sharply, facing RANJE*) Don't you remember where you put them?

RANJE. (*Bored*) No.

NORAH. (*Arms akimbo at L. C. accusingly*) You didn't sell them to the construction-gang, did you?

RANJE. (*Indignantly*) Norah!

NORAH. (*Dismissing it with hand*) Well, I wouldn't put it past you! (*To below table c.*) Did you look in the private room? (*Indicating door R. 2*)

RANJE. (*Brightening up, remembering*) Ah! No! (*Turns up toward R. 2*)

NORAH. (*Following RANJE up R. C. to below table up R.*) That's where they are, then. (*RANJE exits R. 2, gets lighted lanterns, red glass. NORAH stops and continues*) We used them for decorations the night we had the party from Peekskill. (*Front, voiced thought, disgustedly*) I notice them Peekskill sports always have to have the room warmed up for them!

RANJE. (*Off R. 2, delightedly*) Ya-as. Here they are.

(DOOLIN enters down L. comes below table down L. C.)

NORAH. (*To RANJE off R. 2 still by table up R.*) Well, light them up and get them out on the road as quick as you can. (*Turns C. sees DOOLIN, breaks to smiling blarney*) Good evening, Mr. Doolin!

DOOLIN. Evening to you, Mrs. Ranje. (*Looking about stage*) Where's the foreigner?

NORAH. He'll be here in a minute. (*Flatteringly, then to R. lower end table C.*) I'm surprised to see you out on such a night. Won't the missus and children be worrying about you?

DOOLIN. (*Hard*) They know I'm out on business.

NORAH. (*Coaxingly, going toward DOOLIN a couple steps*) Sure, it's not money you're after, on a night like this?

DOOLIN. One hundred and sixty-five is the amount. I hope he has it for me.

NORAH. (*Tears coming, coming to chair L. of table C.*) It's a barren hope, Mr. Doolin. We've been living on our savings ever since we came out here. And now—now that's all gone. (*Sinks into chair L. of table C.*)

DOOLIN. (*Inflexibly, facing front*) Then it's the height of kindness to put you out of your misery.

NORAH. (*Pleadingly*) You'll not close us up?

DOOLIN. (*Hard*) What's the use trying to keep an "Inn"—when it's all going out?

NORAH. (*Pleadingly, hands stretched out to DOOLIN, still seated*) If you'll only give us a little time——

DOOLIN. Mrs. Ranje—time was, when a justice of the peace could pick up an honest penny by stretching a chain across the road and accepting a fine from an automobile driver. (*Regretfully*) But them days have gone by. Them chauffeurs are so law-respecting nowadays, that you have to shove 'em out of the road to make way for a horse and buggy. There's no money to be had, except from income-producing property; and then only when the tenants produce! (*Pause*) Do you get my—(*Pause*) point?

NORAH. (*Hopelessly*) I do.

DOOLIN. (*With finality*) Very well. Then I'll have a talk with your husband and settle this matter, once and for all. (*Turns L. a step*)

(NORAH *hopelessly rises and to R. C.*)

RANJE. (*Enters R. 2 with two lighted red lanterns, one in each hand, held at arm's-length. down R. a little*) Ah! Meester Doolin! I am glad to see you again.

DOOLIN. (*Ungraciously, turning to face RANJE*) Are you? Then perhaps I'll get what I came for.

RANJE. (*Crossing along front to door down L., making a ceremony of work*) If you will excuse me for the moment, I must put out the lights.

DOOLIN. What are you going to do with them danger signals? (RANJE *down L. facing DOOLIN*)

NORAH. (*Turning to DOOLIN at R. C. Apol-*

ogetical) Oh, for fear a stray automobile may bump into us! (DOOLIN *nods wisely, suspicion of a smile*. NORAH, *continuing*) It's a dark night. (To RANJE, *sharply*) Put them where the wind won't blow them down, and come right back. (With nod at DOOLIN) Mr. Doo-lin—(Sharply) has something important to tell you!

RANJE. Ya-as, my dar-ling. (*Exits down L.*)

DOOLIN. (*Going L. a little after RANJE, looking after him*) I don't want to be inquisitive, Mrs. Ranje—(Turns to face NORAH) But what in the name of God ever possessed a decent girl like yourself—to marry a cigarette-sign like that?

NORAH. (*Coming to front c.*) Sure—if you could have seen him with all them grand clothes. (*Imitating RANJE at Sherry's, moving R.*) Moving in and out among them society ladies at Sherry's. You'd hardly be blaming a poor coat-room-girl like myself, for being overcome, at the attentions of a prince!

DOOLIN. So!—It was the title you fell for?

NORAH. I fell so hard—it sounded like an explosion! (To R. c.)

DOOLIN. (*Ponderously*) Well—if he can give me part of the money on—account, I'll be lenient.

RANJE. (*Entering down L. sweeping bow and salaam*) At your service, Meester Doo-lin.

DOOLIN. (*Unmoved*) How much have you got?

(RANJE, at a loss, looks at NORAH.)

NORAH. (*Sharply*) Sure—money he means.

DOOLIN. Come across with a hundred and I'll let the rest go.

RANJE. (*Hand in pocket for money, with a wide smile*) But I have no more than four-teen.

DOOLIN. (*Angrily*) Fourteen! And do you expect me to take that for a hundred and sixty-five?

RANJE. (*Quickly, conciliatingly, smiling*) By to-morrow we might have more.

DOOLIN. By to-morrow you'll be out of this place, or I miss my guess?

NORAH. (*Crossing tearfully to DOOLIN*) Ah, don't be too hard on us, Mr. Doolin!

DOOLIN. I want no more excuses. (*Faces NORAH. RANJE goes up L. a little sulkily. DOOLIN, continuing*) I'm sorry for you, as I said. But business is business and you go out of here to-morrow unless I get a hundred on account! Them's my last words. (*Crosses toward down L.*)

NORAH. (*Crossing toward DOOLIN to down L. c. pleadingly*) But, Mr. Doolin——!

DOOLIN. (*At down L. turns to NORAH*) That's final! (*Distant thunder, then more lightning up c. Noting lightning up c. turns up coat collar*) Holy Mackerel, but it's coming up quick! I'll have just time to make it before the storm breaks. (*Turns to exit; turns in doorway*) Remember! To-morrow morning! Good night! (*Exits down L.*)

(*Distant thunder up c.*)

RANJE. (*Coming down, vengefully*) Che a cheller-je! (*Or words to that effect—Romantically*) He has no soul, that man!

NORAH. (*Practically*) He has an eye to business which is worse! What's to prevent him from taking every stitch of clothes we have? (*Comes c.*) It was an evil day when we gave up our good jobs at Sherry's to go in for road-house keeping. (*Auto horn in distance. Sharpens up*) Did you hear that? (*Stops*)

RANJE. (*Stops, listening. Auto horn again*) An automobile! (*Runs to foots R. c., raises imaginary curtain, and peers out through imaginary window*)

(Start motor effect. Keep down. Auto horn nearer.)

NORAH. *(Down beside RANJE, looking out window)* He's speeding like mad, by the sound of it!

(Auto horn nearer. Motor louder.)

RANJE. Do you think he will stop?

NORAH. He's got to stop! *(Auto horn again. Motor louder)* Where are the bottles? *(Looks about hurriedly, sees beer bottles up R. on table; runs to them. Auto horn sounds twice. Increase motor effect. RANJE runs to door L. 1, then back to lower end table C. NORAH seizes bottles, rushes down to C. and gives them to RANJE. RANJE takes bottles, runs off down L. NORAH up L. C. anxiously looks after RANJE. Break bottle off L. Break second bottle. Motor and horn louder. RANJE counts three after second bottle crash is heard. Enters down L. to NORAH, listens eagerly. NORAH down L. C. listens eagerly. Fire revolver off L. at back wall. Stop horn. Start compressed air I E. Give escaping air effect. RANJE and NORAH halt for a moment after shot, then burst into joyous laughter of triumph at the result of their bottle smashing. Look at each other delightedly. Stop air affect. NORAH swings RANJE R. below her, starting him R. and hurrying to light above door down L. Turns button. Bracket L. on footlight strip L. on. RANJE crossing down R. above chair before fireplace turns on bracket-light up-stage over mantel down R. Bracket R. upstage and C. Footlight strip R., on. Business with chair down R. to give electrician ample time for cue. Then turns on bracket-light down-stage down R. over mantel. Bracket R. down-stage and R. Footlight strip R. on. NORAH on turning up*

bracket-light L. goes immediately to sideboard up L. against staircase, gets out clean table-cloth from a drawer, runs to C. table and starts spreading cloth. RANJE on turning up bracket-light down-stage R. runs to C., and helps NORAH) Have we enough drinks in the house?

RANJE. Suppose they ask for dinner?

NORAH. Leave it to me. There's one chicken in the ice-box.

RANJE. One chicken! Is that all we have to eat in the house?

NORAH. If they want something fancy, we still have the sausage! (*Turns up L. C. to RANJE*) If they look good, show them the menu-card you brought with you from Sherry's! (*Looks R. I., then to RANJE*) Be quick, now! I hear them coming. (*Exits L. E. 2 into kitchen, leaving door open*)

(*RANJE goes quickly around table and to above door down L. Stands all smiles, waiting to receive guests.*)

BETTY. (*Indignantly off L. C. and coming down*) It's outrageous! The idea of having a lot of glass in the road like that! (*Entering down R.*) Somebody ought to be arrested. (*Not seeing RANJE, crosses to C.*)

HARRY. (*Off down L.*) Only about forty more miles to Wildwood, too! (*Enters down R.*)

BETTY. (*At C.*) We'll never be able to make it now!

HARRY. (*Crossing to BETTY, throwing cap to table L. C.*) Why not? Won't take long to change shoes. We've demountables, you know.

BETTY. (*R. C.*) Just the same, somebody ought to be made to pay for the tires! I just know somebody threw those bottles there on purpose!

HARRY. (*At C.*) At any rate, we'll have time

for a drink, and I don't mind telling you I need one.

BETTY. (*Going up R. c.*) Where's the waiter? Isn't there anybody in this place?

(HARRY goes up R. c. by BETTY.)

RANJE. (*Coming below table down L. c. exuberantly with grandiloquent politeness*) Madame wishes for something?

(BETTY and HARRY face L. toward RANJE, staring at him.)

HARRY. (*Backs a step, surprised*) Are you the proprietor of this place?

RANJE. Yes, sir. (*Polite bow*)

HARRY. (*Angrily, crossing to down L. c.*) What the devil do you mean by throwing bottles in the road!

BETTY. (*Following HARRY anxiously to c.*) You ought to be arrested!

RANJE. (*Frightened, drawing L.*) Bot-tles?

HARRY. (*Sharply*) Yes, bottles! I've been up against that same trick before!

RANJE. (*All smiles*) Oh, you must be mistaken! If your tire is punctured——

HARRY. Punctured? There's a hole in the shoe big enough to put your fist through!

RANJE. (*Conciliatory*) Oh, I am so very sorry! But I do not believe it was bottles!

HARRY. (*Angrily, going toward RANJE*) Damn it! Do you mean to tell me I'm a——?

BETTY. (*Stopping HARRY,—soothingly*) Now, dear! Don't lose your temper. Perhaps it wasn't the poor man's fault after all.

RANJE. (*Deep bow*) Madame has a kind heart: I am obliged.

HARRY. (*Recovering composure, turns to BETTY*) Well, perhaps you're right, Betty. (*Taking her R. table c.*) It might have been worse, and if we're going to have an adventure, let's have everything that goes with it. (*Turns to RANJE*) We can get a drink, can't we?

RANJE. (*Crossing to L. c.—delightedly*) Certainly, sir. What would you like?

HARRY. (*To BETTY*) How about a cocktail, Betty?

BETTY. (*At R. c.*) Oh, no. I hate them.

HARRY. Oh, go on. Just the thing you need to brace you up!

BETTY. (*Smilingly*) Well, dear, if you think it's good for me—? (*Turns up R. c. looking about room with delight, goes to rear*)

HARRY. (*Turning to RANJE*) Two cocktails—Martinis.

RANJE. (*Exuberantly—bowing*) Yes, sir. (*HARRY turns toward R. fireplace. Quicgly, eagerly*) Would you like anything to eat, sir?

HARRY. No, no.

RANJE. Oh, we prepare some very nice dishes!

HARRY. Nothing, thank you. Hurry up those drinks. (*Taking off coat*)

RANJE. Yes, sir. (*Somewhat disappointed, quickly exits L. 2*)

(*HARRY hangs his coat over chair by fireplace.*)

BETTY. (*Up R. c. taking in all room with glances delightedly, romantically*) Oh, I think this place is lovely! (*Coming down R. c. straight*) It's so romantic, and picturesque! (*Pausing front down R. c. looking at HARRY*) Do you know, I shouldn't wonder if we could get a good dinner here.

HARRY. (*Pleased, stepping toward BETTY*) Would you rather dine here?

BETTY. (*Wanting to stay yet not desiring to*

make her wish too evident) I suppose it would put your man out horribly. You telephoned him to have everything prepared, didn't you?

HARRY. Oh, Dickson won't mind being put out! He's used to it. And if you're hungry——?

BETTY. I am a little hungry. I missed my tea, you know.

(RANJE enters majestically L. 2, bearing tray high in air, with cocktails slowly to table c.)

HARRY. Why didn't you tell me? Of course we'll dine here. *(Sees RANJE, crosses BETTY to front c.)* Here we are! A nice little appetizer! *(Takes cocktails, passing one to BETTY. BETTY, following HARRY c., takes cocktail. HARRY turning to RANJE)* What kind of a dinner do you serve?

RANJE. *(Delightedly)* Oh, the best of everything, sir.

HARRY. Let me see your menu. *(Casually, as he turns to BETTY)*

RANJE. *(Eagerly)* Certainly, sir. *(Rushes to sideboard L., rummages in top drawer, brushing contents aside and to floor, and finds menu)*

HARRY. *(To BETTY)* Here you are, dear. *(Lifts glass)* Gulp it down. It'll do you good. *(BETTY and HARRY drink cocktails, and make wry faces. RANJE, wiping menu card on trousers as he comes down to L. of HARRY, holds card behind back with right hand, tray in left hand, extends tray. HARRY takes BETTY's glass and puts it, with his own, on tray; then turns to BETTY)*

RANJE. *(Presents menu with a flourish)* The menu, sir.

(HARRY faces RANJE, almost running nose into menu card. Takes it, and looks at it. HARRY shows delighted surprise.)

HARRY. By Jove!—*(Turns to RANJE)* You

don't mean to tell me you have all this variety?
(*RANJE deprecatingly waves aside compliment, crossing to table down L. C. and placing tray on it. BETTY comes down to HARRY'S R. with eager anticipation*) It's like dining at Sherry's! (*Looking at menu*) What do you think you'd like, Betty?
(*Sitting on end table c.*)

BETTY. (*Lovingly*) I'd rather you would do the ordering.

(*RANJE gets out pad and pencil, with elaborate preparation to take order.*)

HARRY. How about an *hors d'oeuvre*?

RANJE. (*Coming R. a little*) Oh, we have some very grand—sausage!

HARRY. (*Looks at RANJE, turns to BETTY disgustedly*) Good Lord, no! We don't want sausage!

BETTY. (*Disgusted at the thought*) I think I'd like a grape-fruit cocktail. (*Pointing to menu*)

RANJE. Oh, Madame! I am so sorry, but I just served the last grape-fruit to a Pierce-Arrow a moment ago.

HARRY. (*Off-handedly*) Well, bring us whatever *hors d'oeuvre* you have. Mix it up. (*Looks at menu*)

RANJE. (*With a flourish*) Yes, sir. (*Writing on pad*) Mixed—sausage!

HARRY. Soup, Betty?

BETTY. No, thanks.

HARRY. Pass the soup. (*Looks at menu*) How about oysters?

RANJE. (*Horrified, trying to frighten them off*) Oh! I would not recommend them at this time of the year, sir!

HARRY. (*At a loss, turning to RANJE*) Why not?

RANJE. Oysters are very dangerous!

HARRY. In October?

RANJE. The worst month in the year for them!

(HARRY *turns questioningly to BETTY*)

BETTY. I didn't know that, did you?

HARRY. (*Glancing about cautiously*) Forty miles from the ocean. Well, no use taking chances. (*Looking at menu*) Let's start with fish.

RANJE. Oh! Fish are worse than the oysters!

(BETTY and HARRY *look at RANJE, at a loss.*
RANJE *coaxingly*) Better try a nice chicken.

(HARRY *looks at BETTY inquiringly.*)

BETTY. Oh, I'm tired of chicken!

HARRY. How about a boneless squab?

(RANJE *is in despair.*)

BETTY. (*Delightedly*) Or brochette of sweet-breads?

RANJE. (*Singing the line*) Oh, but—Madame! That will take time. If I might suggest——?

HARRY. (*With disgust*) What?

RANJE. (*Making his suggestion the most tempting imaginable*) Chicken-a-l'Oscawana! Umm— (*Tosses fingers from lips to air*) It is very fine.

BETTY. Perhaps we had better leave it to him, dear?

HARRY. (*Eyeing RANJE,—pointedly*) What is your specialty here?

RANJE. (*Deep bow*) Chicken!

(BETTY *makes moue and turns R.*)

HARRY. (*To BETTY*) Perhaps it's a new kind of chicken. (*Turns to RANJE,—off-handedly*) All right. I'll leave it to you. Get us up a good dinner. Your best! (*Turns R.*)

RANJE. Very good, sir. (*Turns toward L. 2*)

HARRY. (*Facing RANJE*) By the way, what is your name?

RANJE. (*Front, up L. C. with all the dignity of an Eastern potentate*) I am known as Prince Ranje Boulle, formerly of Sherry's.

HARRY. (*Smilingly turning to BETTY*) Prince Ranje Boulle, eh? That's pretty good for a small roadhouse.

RANJE. It is my name, sir. (*Drawing himself up with dignity*)

HARRY. (*Mollifying RANJE, and smiling*) I don't doubt it.

RANJE. (*Polite bow*) I will order the dinner. (*Exits L. 2*)

HARRY. Go to it! (*Crossing toward BETTY down R.*) Well, now we're all set. A jolly little dinner and then away we go for our own home!

BETTY. (*Coming to HARRY, with roguish delight and anxiety*) I wonder what Gertrude and Tom think of us? They can't have the slightest idea where we are.

HARRY. (*Embracing her*) What do we care about Gertrude and Tom! They're all right in their own little way, but we don't want any more third parties in ours, do we?

BETTY. No, dear. But I was thinking— (*Modestly bringing out fact that she wants to stay all night*) Suppose they try to find us?

HARRY. How could they?

BETTY. (*Business with foot repeated*) Not here, of course. But if they found out that we had gone to Wildwood, they might tell Dick.

HARRY. (*Petting BETTY*) Now, don't you go to worrying about Dick! I've got you all to myself now, and I'm not going to share you with anyone. You understand what I mean, don't you?

BETTY. Yes, dear. And that's why I thought—

if it could be arranged—this seems such a cosy little place. Nobody would ever think of looking for us here! (*Looking down at her foot and moving it along the floor*)

HARRY. (*Delightedly as idea dawns on him*)
You mean—? Stay here for the night?

BETTY. (*Embarrassed*) Well, I thought—

HARRY. (*Quickly*) Of course! It's a corking idea! It'll make us feel as if we weren't married at all! (*Turns front c.*)

BETTY. (*Shocked*) Harry!

HARRY. I mean—(*Taking BETTY in arms,—romantically*) it will make us feel as if it were our first honeymoon. And it is our first—really! I'll find out if they have any rooms here.

BETTY. (*Suddenly*) Harry? (*HARRY pauses, turns front c., and inquiringly to BETTY. BETTY crosses to HARRY*) You mustn't let them know!

HARRY. (*At a loss*) Eh? (*Waits a moment, then apprehending BETTY's meaning*) Oh, the Prince won't ask any questions! They never do in these places. (*Turns L.*)

BETTY. (*With wide eyed indignation,—shocked*)
How do you know?

HARRY. (*Embarrassed, at momentary loss. Then to BETTY exuberantly taking her in his arms*)
Well—never mind. In the morning we'll have our breakfast and go on just as if nothing had happened.

RANJE. (*Entering L. 2 going to sideboard up L. c.*) Dinner will be ready very soon.

HARRY. Thank you. (*BETTY goes R. a step. HARRY to RANJE*) By the way—(*RANJE turns to HARRY attentively. HARRY beckons him*)

RANJE. Yes, sir? (*Quickly down L. c., all smiles*)

HARRY. (*Striving to be casual*) I suppose you run this place as a sort of a hotel, don't you?

RANJE. (*Joyfully*) Yes, sir.

HARRY. Well, there's no sense going on in the storm if we can find accommodations here—and my wife thinks—(*With the guilt of innocence, emphasizing "wife"*)

RANJE. (*In delighted surprise*) Oh! The young lady is your wife?

(*BETTY, shocked, shows nervous embarrassment.*)

HARRY. (*Taken aback, resentingly*) Certainly! What did you think she was?

RANJE. Well, I never know what to think! (*All smiles*)

HARRY. (*Sharply*) Can you put us up for the night?

RANJE. (*Quickly, delightedly*) Oh, yes, sir! I think we can take the very best of care of you. (*Twirling moustache, comes down a step eyeing BETTY from head to foot. BETTY, alarmed looks at RANJE*) But I will consult with my wife. (*Up to L. 2*)

BETTY. (*Crossing, fearfully, to HARRY at c.*) Harry! Why did he look at me like that? (*Clings to him*)

HARRY. (*Reassuringly*) They don't seem accustomed to guests.

RANJE. (*At L. 2 calling off*) Norah! Norah!

NORAH. (*Off L. 2*) What is it?

RANJE. (*Calling off L. 2*) Come here a moment.

BETTY. (*Suddenly in wide-eyed terror*) Harry! (*Crosses to HARRY*) You don't suppose they're going to ask for our marriage certificate?

HARRY. (*Taken aback; recovers. Reassuringly*) Nonsense. (*Laughs*)

NORAH. (*Entering L. 2, a little worried*) What's the trouble? (*Pausing down L. c.*)

RANJE. (*As NORAH goes down L. c.*) The lady

and the gentleman wish to stay here for the night.
(*Comes down L.*)

HARRY. (*Pleasantly, ingratiatingly, goes L. and up to NORAH*) This is—Madame Princess, I suppose?

NORAH. Yes, sir.

HARRY. (*Most pleasantly*) I have a home of my own about forty miles further on; but my wife and I—(*Looks at BETTY. NORAH winks at RANJE*) Well, we rather fancy your place, and if you can find it convenient to take care of us——

RANJE. (*At down L. below table down L. c.*) Why, they could have our room!

HARRY. (*Quickly*) Oh, no. We don't want to inconvenience you at all. Any room will do us. Eh, Betty? (*Glances at BETTY*)

(*BETTY nods smilingly.*)

RANJE. (*All smiles*) Oh! But we have no other!

NORAH. (*Sotto voce to RANJE*) Shut up! Of course we have another! (*RANJE stands at a loss. NORAH turning to HARRY, with a touch of blarney, indicating up L.*) We've a perfect darlin' of a room on this side; with a grand view of the river! Perhaps the young lady would like to take a look at it? (*Moves up L. c. indicating room*)

HARRY. (*Delightedly, turning to BETTY*) Yes, do, Betty. And meanwhile I'll go get our things and have the car put up for the night. (*Crosses L. below RANJE*) You have a garage, of course?

RANJE. Certainly. I'll show you the way. (*Deep bow, comes below table down L. c.*)

HARRY. (*Getting hat from table down L. c. as he crosses RANJE; turns as RANJE is bowing, raises his head, and blows kiss to BETTY*) I'll only be a minute, Betty! (*Exits down L.*)

(RANJE *exits down L. after HARRY. BETTY, still down L. C., blows kiss to HARRY.*)

NORAH. (*At L. end table C. looks after HARRY, smiles, then flatteringly to BETTY*) Ah, sure it's the handsome gentleman he is. Have you been married long?

BETTY. (*Embarrassed, turns front*) Well—that is——

NORAH. Ah!—I could tell it the first time I looked at both of you.

BETTY. Tell—what? (*Nervous and alarmed*)

NORAH. It's your honeymoon, you're on. (*All smiles*)

BETTY. (*Nervously goes L. a little, to chair R. of table C.*) Oh, no. Not quite that. (*Endeavoring to appear matronly*) We've been married some time.

NORAH. (*Positively*) Sure, no man could look at a woman the way he looked at you, if he'd been married to her long!

BETTY. Nearly two years.

NORAH. (*Astonished*) Two years! And him loving you like that? (*Looks L. 1, a long pause, then looking front*) God, how I've been cheated! (*She turns up C. to rear of table, then up R. C.*)

(RANJE *enters down L. carrying grip up L. C.*)

HARRY. (*Entering down R. almost on RANJE's heels, carrying his suitcase*) Here you are! (RANJE *pauses, facing HARRY*) Take this, too! (*Passes RANJE the suitcase. RANJE takes suitcase, goes upstairs*) How's the room, Betty? All right? (*Stops down L. C.; then up L. C. to upper end of table*)

BETTY. (*Gladly, to HARRY*) I didn't look at it.

HARRY. (*Taking BETTY up L. C.*) Well, we'll

have a look-in at once. (*Up staircase L. c. As they mount stairs, indicating head of stairs, delightedly*) Isn't this great! By George! This is something like! (*Exits L. U. with BETTY*)

(*Auto horn in distance. NORAH up R. c. tense; listens. Auto horn again. NORAH runs to foot of staircase up L. c., and calls.*)

NORAH. Ranje! Ranje!

RANJE. (*Entering L. U.*) What is it?

NORAH. Come here! (*Start motor effect in distance. Runs down to imaginary window front L. c. listens, tense. RANJE runs down L. c. and L. of NORAH*) Listen! (*Pause. Motor and auto horn louder. RANJE listens. NORAH anxiously*) Will they stop?

RANJE. Another bottle. (*Turns up R. c.*)

NORAH. (*Stopping RANJE*) No! The Lord's with us to-night! I feel it! (*Auto horn twice, nearer. Motor to height. Tire explodes! Pistoh Stop horn. Motor runs on a few seconds. Escaping air. Paper. A long delighted laugh from NORAH and RANJE*) Didn't I tell you! Quick, Ranje! Out with you! It's a heaven-sent gift! (*Urges RANJE off down R. RANJE scurries down L. and exits. NORAH exits L. 2*)

GERTRUDE. (*Off L. 1, impatiently*) Of course, it's Harry's car! I'd know it among a thousand! Haven't I been in it often enough? (*Enters down L. and toward c.*)

TOM. (*Off down L.*) What would they be doing in a place like this?

GERTRUDE. (*Down L. c.; pauses, speaking over shoulder to TOM*) Well, what are we doing!

TOM. (*Entering down L.*) That's different! You can't prevent accidents!

BETTY. (*Entering L. U. sees duo. Big surprise*) It's Gertrude!

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HARRY. (*Entering R. U. big surprise on seeing duo—with disappointment*) Well, I'll be damn—!

(TOM looks at them as he and GERTRUDE go below table down L. C.)

GERTRUDE. (*At R. C., delightedly*) Betty! Thank heavens, we've found you!

(BETTY comes down-stairs and above table c. To GERTRUDE.)

TOM. By Jove! Here they are! This is a bit of luck! (*Turns front, takes off coat and hat, lays them on table L. C.*)

(HARRY comes down-stairs then down L. C. above TOM not relaxing his tension.)

GERTRUDE. (*Taking BETTY down R. C. Solicitously*) My dear! You don't know how I've suffered for fear we wouldn't reach you in time!

BETTY. But how did you know we were here?

GERTRUDE. Tom heard you talk about Wildwood. Otherwise we wouldn't have had the slightest idea. And when we saw Harry's car outside—(*Lapses into pantomime conversation with BETTY*)

(BETTY pantomimes conversation with GERTRUDE.

HARRY gives TOM a slap on back. TOM taken off balance, staggers L. Business.)

HARRY. Will you kindly tell me what this all means?

TOM. (*Angrily*) Now, don't get your goat loose, old man! It hasn't been a pleasant chase for us. What with the storm coming on, and Gertrude blaming me for the whole business, you

ought to be damned grateful, that's all! (*Sits angrily chair R. table down L. C.*)

HARRY. Well, I'm not! And if our positions were reversed, I'd have had more consideration for you than to butt in on what is—well—essentially a private matter.

TOM. (*With sarcastic anger*) Private, eh? You'll be mighty lucky if you can keep this thing private!

HARRY. What the devil do you mean?

(*BETTY and GERTRUDE become attentive.*)

TOM. (*Laying it on thick*) Oh, it's an awful mess, Harry! An awful mess! And the worst of it is, Gert and I are largely responsible for it. However, we're in time to stop it, thanks to Dick.

BETTY. (*Coming c. a step*) Dick?

HARRY. Do you mean to tell me that Dick is here, too?

TOM. If it hadn't been for Dick, we wouldn't have known anything about it!

HARRY. (*Consoling, crossing to BETTY front c.*) Oh, my poor darling!

BETTY. (*To TOM*) Where is he?

(*DICK enters down R., and pauses.*)

HARRY. (*Disgusted*) Oh!

BETTY. Dick! (*Impulsively starts toward him*)

(*HARRY pulls BETTY back into his arms. Angrily facing DICK.*)

DICK. (*With nasty triumph*) Aha! So it is

HARRY. (*With menacing restraint*) See here, your car! Betty! Come away from that man!

young man! I've had just about all the interference from you I'm going to stand. And if you don't keep out of this——

DICK. (*In the same tone*) I don't want to hear anything from you at all! It's a mighty lucky thing for you that I don't take the law into my own hands! That's what most brothers would do under the same circumstances.

HARRY. (*Angrily*) Why, for two pins——!
(*Starts toward DICK menacingly*)

(*DICK starts toward HARRY, then draws back.*
TOM hastily steps between them.)

TOM. Here. Here! (*To HARRY*) Cut it, old man. You mustn't mind what the kid says. He's a bit excited.

GERTRUDE. (*Topping TOM and speaking in unison with him, she comes c. r. of BETTY*) Gentlemen! Gentlemen! please! (*BETTY restrains HARRY as he starts toward DICK. DICK becomes very brave and menacing toward HARRY as TOM steps in. GERTRUDE continues*) I am sure we're all indebted to Richard! If it hadn't been for him we might never have known of it in time. (*Mysteriously, to BETTY*) Betty! You must get your things together, and come with me at once! Nobody must know that you two have been here together to-night!

BETTY. (*Fearful*) Is there anything wrong in my being with my husband?

GERTRUDE. (*Pointedly*) My dear, Harry is not your husband!

BETTY. (*At a loss*) Not my husband?

HARRY. (*Impatiently, to GERTRUDE*) Do you mean to say that my wife——?

DICK. (*Sharply*) Betty is not your wife!

HARRY. (*Almost speechless with vexation*) Is he crazy, or am I? (*Starts toward DICK*)

BETTY. (*Stopping HARRY*) Wait! Harry! Wait! There must be some reason for all this, and we must know it!

DICK. I should say there was a reason! If we hadn't gotten here at the psychological moment, Betty, your reputation would have been irretrievably ruined!

(*BETTY aghast, but at a loss.*)

HARRY. (*Almost voiceless with rage*) If somebody doesn't take that idiot out of here—! (*Starts toward DICK. TOM stops HARRY*)

(*DICK stops a moment then goes up L. across rear and down R.*)

GERTRUDE. Oh, it's true, Harry! Quite true! It wouldn't have mattered about you. You are a man. But poor Betty is a woman—(*Highly moral, takes BETTY from HARRY and pivots her to L. c.*) And a woman never recovers from a thing like this.

HARRY. What kind of a thing are you talking about?

TOM. (*Crossing to HARRY, exasperated at his dullness*) Don't you understand?

HARRY. No, I don't! I've been told that Betty isn't my wife and that I'm not her husband. If that is true, then what the blazes are we to each other?

(*DICK down R. TOM pantomimes the hopelessness of attempting to explain.*)

DICK. Nothing! Nothing at all! (*Gleefully, to BETTY. TOM goes up to sideboard L. c., and pours drink into whiskey glass from decanter, slowly*) Betty, I am glad to say that your application for

absolute divorce from Harry Lindsey was granted this afternoon.

HARRY. What! (*Stops c. thunderstruck*)

(*BETTY is aghast.*)

DICK. (*Gleefully*) The final decree was signed by Judge Simpson, and you are now—(*Pointedly*) forever free from this man!

(*HARRY limply leans against table c.*)

BETTY. (*Slowly recovering from shock; miserably*) Oh, it's too horrible!

DICK. (*Gleefully*) Didn't you understand, sis? You're free!

BETTY. But I don't want to be free!

DICK. You've got to be free!—Any other relationship under the circumstances would be illegal!

HARRY. (*Outraged*) Oh, that is going too far! (*Starts R. for DICK*)

GERTRUDE. (*Stepping down, and stopping HARRY*) There's no use getting angry about it, Harry. Betty has asked for a divorce, and now she's got it!

BETTY. (*Positively*) But I've changed my mind!

DICK. (*Backing a step*) Oh, my God! (*TOM at sideboard up L. c. pours drink of whiskey, and holds it up admiringly. DICK goes up R. c. rapidly above table c. to TOM, snatches whiskey from him, and drinks it, coming down L.*)

(*TOM, angry at DICK, pours another drink.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Comes up-stage to R. down R. pantomimes exasperation at BETTY's vacillation and faces BETTY—now to her L.*) My dear! The judge didn't know you were going to change your mind.

The only thing we can do now is to get you back to town before anybody finds out what has happened.

(BETTY slowly turns toward GERTRUDE.)

HARRY. (*Taking BETTY in his arms*) She's not going back to town. She's going to stay here with me.

GERTRUDE. Are you out of your senses? Think of the scandal!

HARRY. (*Boyishly*) I'm not going to think of anybody but ourselves! We've started on a honeymoon, and we're going through with it.

BETTY. (*Disengages herself,—highly moral*) No, dear. We mustn't do anything so shocking. If we've made a mistake, it must be rectified. We mustn't be ashamed to face the world. (*Mysteriously in a whisper*) Why, just think, dear. We might have committed a terrible crime!

HARRY. (*Smiles*) Oh, nonsense! Suppose a divorce has been granted? We still love each other, don't we? And if we choose to stay married in spite of it——

GERTRUDE. (*Shocked*) Harry! Be decent, at any rate!

HARRY. (*Boyishly*) It's nobody's business but ours! (*Takes BETTY in his arms c.*)

(Tom works up beside chair R. of table down L. c.)

DICK. (*Sharply, down L.*) Pardon me! It's my business. (*HARRY faces DICK*) And I'm not going to let my sister be mixed up in any nasty scandal!

HARRY. You young rat! If I had you alone for two minutes—(*Starts for DICK*)

(Tom steps between DICK and HARRY, restraining HARRY, but not DICK.)

BETTY. (*To HARRY, holding his right arm*) Harry! Please! I'm sure Gertrude's way is best—for the present at any rate. It's an unfortunate happening, but we must act sensibly about it.

GERTRUDE. Quite right. (*To BETTY*) Where are your things?

BETTY. (*Pointing*) In that room.

GERTRUDE. Then get them at once. (*BETTY turns up L. C.*) We must start back immediately. (*Goes up R. C. above table. BETTY and GERTRUDE exit up staircase and off L. U.*)

DICK. (*Delightedly*) That's the talk! (*HARRY moves toward DICK. Lightning up c. DICK quietly, with his eye on HARRY*) I'll get the car ready. (*Exits down L.*)

(*Start shot—rain effect off down L. Distant thunder off up c. HARRY gloomily goes up L. C. across and up to windows up c.; holds; back to foot.*
TOM notices storm, crosses to fireplace down R., and sits in armchair facing fireplace.)

RANJE. (*Enter L. 2 bearing tray with two covered dishes,—French fried potatoes, bread, chicken, etc.; napery and cutlery for two; holding tray high above head, comes to c. table, with grandiose manner setting tray on table*) Dinner is served, sir.

(*Stop shot-rain off down L.*)

HARRY. (*Up c., snappily*) Oh, take it away! I've lost my appetite!

RANJE. (*Disappointedly*) But perhaps the young lady—?

HARRY. (*Testily*) No, she doesn't want anything, either! Throw it in the river! (*Indicating off up L. C., looks out c. doors*)

(TOM evinces interest in food. RANJE takes up tray of food and turns L.)

TOM. (*Rising*) Here! (*Pause. RANJE pauses, facing TOM inquiringly*) Wait a minute! (*Pause*) Is that—food?

RANJE. Yes, sir.

TOM. Well, I'll try a bite. I haven't had a mouthful since lunch. (*Crosses to table c. RANJE places tray on lower end of table c., removes covers from dishes, holding one on each forefinger. Turns up L. c. TOM, at lower end table' c.*) Come here! (*RANJE turns to TOM. TOM sotto voce, hopefully*) Say, you don't happen to have any chocolate cake, do you?

RANJE. (*Without enthusiasm*) No, sir. (*Turns up L. c. and exits L. 2*)

TOM. (*Turning, goes to chair at R. lower end of table c.*) Just my rotten luck! (*Sits*) Come on, old man!—Might as well have something. It's a long ride back to town. (*Selects a choice drumstick from tray*)

HARRY. (*Turning down-stage, walking restlessly and angrily to L. c.*) If I tried to swallow anything now, I'd choke! (*Continues on down to door L. 1. TOM begins to salt drumstick, facing front, left hand holding drumstick. HARRY striding up L. c. sees TOM salting drumstick. He comes angrily down L. of table c. and bangs it violently with right fist, leaning over table,—belligerently, at TOM. TOM salting vigorously, he jumps. Salt flies into his eyes. Draws away to R., closing eyes and turning head to R., squints up face, transfers salt-cellar to L. hand; with L. hand places drumstick and salt-cellar on table, and with R. hand reaches in outside breast pocket of coat, takes out handkerchief and wipes eyes. HARRY angrily*) How you can gorge yourself under these circumstances is beyond me.

(*Resumes angry pacing across rear, turns, comes again down L. C.*)

TOM. (*Wiping eyes*) There's nothing to be sad about! After all, a divorce is only a divorce! You can get married again, if you like. (*Starts eating drumstick, turning it over till he finds a particularly enticing point*)

HARRY. (*Faces TOM, sharply*) What's that?

TOM. Why, certainly! It's quite the proper thing to do! We'll go back quietly, without any fuss—and—the first thing to-morrow morning—you can go out—and get tied up—all over again. (*Starts to eat, holding drumstick in left hand and slowly bringing it toward his mouth, holding forearm parallel to table top. HARRY springs to table, grasps TOM's left wrist just as he is about to bite into drumstick. TOM holds with mouth open, looking up at HARRY*)

HARRY. Why wait for to-morrow morning?

TOM. (*At a loss*) What?

HARRY. Why can't it be done to-night?

TOM. Don't be an idiot. (*Starts to eat; business as before*)

(*HARRY grasps TOM's wrist.*)

HARRY. Is there any law against getting married at night?

TOM. No. But the law requires a qualified clergyman, or a justice of the peace. And where are you going to find one in this wilderness? (*Starts to eat*)

HARRY. Don't let them get away before I come back! (*Strides to door down L.*)

TOM. (*Rising*) Where are you going?

HARRY. (*Toward TOM*) I'm going to find a man to marry us!

TOM. Wait a moment! (*HARRY faces TOM*) Hadn't you better consult Betty about it first?

HARRY. Perhaps I had. (*Turns hurriedly up L. C. to staircase, calls off L. U.*) Betty!—Bet-ty!

TOM. (*Sitting again*) In the meantime we can inquire if there is a minister in the neighborhood. (*Eats*)

BETTY. (*Enters L. U. at top of stairs*) Are you all ready?

HARRY. (*Seriously, hand resting on newel post*) Betty! I want to ask you something.

BETTY. (*Coming down to HARRY*) What is it?

HARRY. Do you love me well enough to marry me—again?

BETTY. Of course!

HARRY. (*Triumphantly*) Good! (*RANJE enters casually L. 2 and goes across. HARRY, seeing RANJE, quickly gripping his right wrist*) Oh! Prince! You're just the man I want to see! (*Takes RANJE down to L. C. front. RANJE stumbling shows blank amazement. BETTY comes down R. C. GERTRUDE enters L. U. and comes down staircase to landing; stops at a loss*) Do you know of any minister around here?

RANJE. (*At a loss*) Minister?

HARRY. You know! A man who buries people or marries them, as the case may be.

GERTRUDE. (*Keenly suspicious of HARRY and BETTY*) What are you two up to now?

HARRY. (*To GERTRUDE*) You'll hear all about it in a minute. (*To RANJE*) Do you?

RANJE. No. I do not.

HARRY. (*Quickly*) Perhaps your wife will know? (*Hustling RANJE up L. C. toward L. 2*) She looks as though she went to church once in a while. (*Pushes RANJE off L. 2; turns R.*)

RANJE. (*On exit*) I will ask her.

(*TOM faces front as he eats.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Coming to L. upper end of table c.*)
Good heavens! What is all this about?

HARRY. (*Facing GERTRUDE up L. c.—joyfully*)
Betty and I are going to be married here—to-night.

BETTY. (*Surprised*) Here?

GERTRUDE. Impossible!

HARRY. No it's not! It's the proper thing to do. And perfectly legal. Ask Tom. He knows all about it.

(*TOM eating, nods head grumbling assent.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Looks at TOM, disgustedly*) I never heard of anything so silly in all my life.

(*TOM nods, realizes, and shakes head.*)

HARRY. Silly, eh? Well, it was your own husband who thought of it.

BETTY. (*Crossing below table hurriedly to HARRY*) But, Harry, dear——

HARRY. (*Taking BETTY in arms,—rapidly*)
You can't back out now. You said you'd marry me, and I'm going to hold you to your promise.

(*GERTRUDE crosses to R. c. above table c. as BETTY runs to HARRY.*)

NORAH. (*Entering L. 2*) What is it?

(*BETTY crosses to GERTRUDE at R. c. RANJE L. 2 on NORAH's heels.*)

HARRY. Madame Princess! (*Well front at L. c. NORAH comes down to L. of HARRY. RANJE comes down L. below table down L. c.*) Do you know where a minister can be found? Any old kind will do.

RANJE. I have already told the gentleman——

NORAH. (*Sotto voce to RANJE*) Hold your tongue. What does a heathen know about ministers! (*All smiles—to HARRY*) If it's a marriage you're wanting—?

HARRY. Yes, that's it.

NORAH. What's the matter with a justice of the peace?

HARRY. (*Delighted*) Great! Where can I get one?

NORAH. I'll send my husband. (*Turns to RANJE*)

RANJE. (*Dully*) Justice of the peace?

NORAH. (*Sotto voce, impatiently*) Doolin! You big boob!

RANJE. (*Remembering,—delighted*) Ah! Doolin!

HARRY. Does he live far?

NORAH. (*Facing RANJE*) Just across the way. (*To RANJE*) Run and call him, Ranje! (*Urges RANJE off down L. RANJE exits down L. NORAH calling off down L. after RANJE*) Tell him to come over at once—(*As he exits*) If he hasn't gone to bed.

HARRY. (*Runs to door down L. and calls off loudly*) If he has, get him up!

NORAH. (*Off down L., walking up*) Oh, and Ranje—Listen!

GERTRUDE. (R. c.) Really! I don't want to seem disagreeable, but this strikes me as being the maddest kind of a lark!

BETTY. But it's so romantic! (*Delighted, running to HARRY at L. front*)

(*TOM finishes drumstick; settles in chair, front.*

HARRY seizes BETTY and whirls her around in joyous dance steps.)

TOM. Well. If you people have finally decided

on what it is you're going to do—you might order me some more food.

HARRY. (*Stopping dance*) Food! Where is it? (*Times end of dance so that BETTY is on his L. Taking her up to upper end of table c.*) I'm as hungry as a bear!

BETTY. So am I. (*Goes to chair up-stage on R. of table c. sits*)

(*GERTRUDE comes below table c. to chair L.*)

TOM. I thought you said you had no appetite?

HARRY. Oh, that was before. Now that we're to be married again, I feel absolutely famished! (*Standing upper end table c., pulls tray from TOM and distributes contents among others. TOM—business at food being taken away*) Sit down, Gertrude. (*Fixes chair for her L. of table. Giving BETTY food*) Here you are, Betty. Tom's been nibbling at it, but there's more where this came from. (*GERTRUDE sits L. of table c.*) Here, Gertrude. (*Gives GERTRUDE food; takes a bite*) Um—this is delicious! (*Eats voraciously*)

TOM. Well! For a man who wanted it thrown into the river, I think you're doing rather well!

(*BETTY and GERTRUDE eat joyfully.*)

HARRY. I'm hap—py—We're all hap—py!

(*All laugh heartily.*)

DICK. (*Enters down L. with hat and raincoat,—wet shoes—muddy; pauses in astonishment below table L. c. Testily*) Well? What's the idea?

HARRY. Oh, see who's here!

(*GERTRUDE, BETTY, and HARRY laugh boisterously.*)

TOM. (*Facing front—ill-naturedly*) Chip in,

DICK. You'll find a bit somewhere—if you're lucky!

DICK. (*Sharply*) We haven't time for that now. I've got the car ready and it's begun to rain. You'd better get started before it gets worse.

(GERTRUDE sneaks a bit of food and passēs it around lower end of table c. to TOM. TOM takes food, trying to conceal act. HARRY rises and sees passing of food. GERTRUDE and TOM so intent on their business that they do not see that HARRY sees it.)

HARRY. (*To DICK*) Oh, the storm don't worry us. (*Turns to BETTY*) Does it, sweetheart? (GERTRUDE, BETTY, TOM, and HARRY laugh at DICK's expense)

BETTY. No, indeed! We don't have to go back now. (GERTRUDE, BETTY, TOM, and HARRY laugh)

DICK. (*Sharply to BETTY*) What's that?

HARRY. You heard what she said. We're not going back to-night. (GERTRUDE, BETTY, TOM, and HARRY laugh)

DICK. (*Angrily, going up L. c.*) Speak for yourself, if you please. It doesn't matter to me what you do, but my sister is going back with me! (*Turns L.*)

HARRY. Ha—ha. (DICK pausing, faces HARRY angrily) And again—Ha—ha—(GERTRUDE, BETTY, TOM, and HARRY laugh)

DICK. (*With a sharp look at all in turn, goes up threateningly to HARRY, fists clinched*) What do you mean by that?

BETTY. (*Rising, all smiles*) He means—that we've found a way out of the difficulty. We're going to get—

HARRY. (*Rising unsteadily with anticipatory delight*) Wait! Let me break it to him! (BETTY

sits laughingly. *With almost tearful laughter, as he speaks with an effort*) This is the happiest moment of my young life. (GERTRUDE, BETTY, TOM, and HARRY laugh) Dick-ey Bird— That little divorce of yours didn't take. We're going to get married again.

DICK. (*Disgusted anger*) Don't be idiotic! It can't be done!

HARRY. (*Pointing to DICK, looking at others, dying with merriment*) It can't be done! Well, you just hang around awhile and we'll let you witness a ceremony that will knock that little divorce decree sky-high! (GERTRUDE, BETTY, TOM, and HARRY laugh)

DICK. (*Desperately*) But, Betty—

BETTY. (*Rising joyfully*) Yes, Dick! It's all arranged! And we've sent for a justice of the peace! (*Sets her chair back starts dance with HARRY R. C. ad lib singing "You made me love you, I didn't want to do it" etc. Bursts into a gale of merriment*)

(HARRY on cue seizes BETTY and dances R. C. ad lib.

GERTRUDE and TOM sing "You made me love you, I didn't want to do it" loudly beating time on table with drumstick and knife)

DICK. (*Raging up and down L. C.*) You're mad! Both of you! I tell you, the idea is impossible!

TOM. Richard, run away and behave yourself. (*Starts business and song again. DICK rages about*)

GERTRUDE. Don't be a kill-joy.

DICK. (*Above the noise*) You're all acting like a lot of fools. They can't get married again. It would be illegal! (*Dead hush. GERTRUDE, BETTY, TOM, and HARRY stand motionless, voiceless*)

TOM. Illegal?

HARRY. What's that?

DICK. Another marriage would constitute a criminal offence!

BETTY. (*Aghast*) What do you mean, Dick?

DICK. I mean—that in your decree of absolute divorce granted by Judge Simpson this afternoon, Harry Lindsey is expressly forbidden to remarry. (*Dead pause*)

TOM. Good Lord!

HARRY. (*Down R.*) Well, of all the idiotic things I ever heard of! I can marry my own wife, can't I?

DICK. (*Triumphantly*) Ah, but Betty is not your wife! (*Crosses front to BETTY down R.*) The best thing for you to do is to put on your things and jump in the car. (*Attempts to take her hand*)

HARRY. (*Clasps BETTY to him*) Do you mean to tell me that the Court has the power to stop two perfectly healthy and sane people from being married?

DICK. It has! When one of those apparently sane and healthy persons has asked to have the other stopped and kept from being married!

HARRY. I never mentioned it!

DICK. No. But my sister did!

HARRY. (*Reproachful—surprise*) Betty!

BETTY. (*Can scarcely meet HARRY's glance*) I didn't want him forbidden to marry me. I only wanted him kept from marrying somebody else.

DICK. That wasn't taken into consideration. (*Crossing front to down L.*)

HARRY. (*Highly moral*) The whole thing is unconstitutional. It won't hold! This is a free country!

DICK. (*Down L.—sarcastically*) I wouldn't advise you to go against a decree of the Court.

HARRY. (*Belligerently*) I'm not asking for your advice. (*Starts toward DICK*)

(BETTY stops HARRY.)

TOM. (*Stepping down at c.*) Now! Wait a minute, you people. Let's put our heads together, and see if we can't think of something. There must be a way out of this. (*Thinks hard and long*)

DICK. (*Hasty triumph*) Is there? Well, I'm a lawyer and I can't think of any.

HARRY. That shows what a bum lawyer you are!

TOM. (*Gleefully*) Hold on! I've got it.

HARRY. (*Unenthusiastically*) What have you got now?

TOM. (*Proudly*) I've solved the difficulty.

ALL. How?

TOM. (*Judicially*) Well—there's no discounting the fact that a divorce has been granted——

DICK. I should say not! (*Sarcastic smile.*
HARRY turns R. *disgustedly*)

TOM. Also—that you are forbidden to re-marry—in this state.

HARRY. In this state?

TOM. (*Triumphantly*) But! There's no law to prevent you from going over to New Jersey and committing the crime!

BETTY. Hooray! (*Delightedly dances with HARRY down R. TOM completely satisfied with himself. GERTRUDE is without enthusiasm. DICK is grouchy*)

HARRY. (*Whirls BETTY around in dance an instant; stops and says*) Tommy, darling! I could kiss you for that! (*Starts toward TOM. TOM sending off HARRY in pantomime, breaks to L. C. quickly, to L. of GERTRUDE*)

BETTY. (*At door R. reprovingly*) Why didn't you tell us about that, Dick?

DICK. (*Exaggeratedly pointing off with R. forefinger on upturned L. palm*) Because it is a technical evasion of the law.

HARRY. Pooh—pooh! (*Imitating Dick lower end table c.*) And who cares about the old law? (*Turns to BETTY joyfully*) What do you say, Betty? Shall it be Jersey?

BETTY. Splendid!

HARRY. Then, Jersey it is. (*Turns c.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Coldly*) In this storm? Not for me, thank you.

BETTY. (*Disappointed—fretfully*) Oh, why not?

GERTRUDE. (*In matter-of-fact tone*) Because our clothes would be ruined, and we'd catch our deaths of cold.

HARRY. All right! You needn't any of you come unless you want to! (*Turns to BETTY*)

GERTRUDE. Besides, by the time you reach New York and cross over to the other side—it will be too late, anyway. You won't find anybody up that time of night. (*Goes to rear of table c.*)

TOM. And you can't get married without a license. (*Holds at chair L. of table, down L. c.*)

HARRY. (*Turning to face TOM,—astonished*) Marriage license? In Jersey?

DICK. (*Sarcastically*) Such little formalities are necessary, even in Jersey!

TOM. So you see, we may as well stay here for the night. (*Sits at chair R. of table down L. c.*)

HARRY. Well, if this isn't the darndest luck! (*Crosses and sits grouchy in chair by fireplace down R. facing R. BETTY sits gloomily chair down stage R. of corner table c. GERTRUDE sits on chair above table c. Pause*)

RANJE. (*Enters quickly, delighted, down L. below table L.*) Here is the justice of the peace.

DOOLIN. (*Enters down L. hurriedly, all smiles, toggled out in tall hat and frock, badly buttoned, comes down L. c.*) Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. (*Pause*) Which is the happy couple?

(*Pause, eyes all in turn*) Usually I can pick them out by the happy look on their faces. But you all look miserable!

TOM. (*Rising, trying to cover embarrassing situation*) Oh, yes! You're the—the—

DOOLIN. (*Quickly, facing TOM*) I don't usually come on a night like this. But when there is a marriage wanted, it's not for me to deny the call of two loving hearts—is it yourself, sir?

TOM. (*Quickly*) Not guilty! (*To GERTRUDE at up c.*)

DOOLIN. (*Eyeing DICK down L.*) Is it you?

DICK. I should say not! (*Goes up L. across rear to down R.*)

DOOLIN. (*Looks at HARRY*) Then it must be this other gentleman. So, if you'll just make yourself ready, sir, I'll have you tied up tighter than a pig in a poke, before you know it. (*RANJE goes up L. and exits L. 2 quickly—for NORAH. Hands behind back, bent knees, looking straight at BETTY, blarneying*) Which of the beautiful ladies is the blushing bride?

BETTY. (*Eyes DOOLIN in frightened embarrassment, rises and sidles up to GERTRUDE*) Oh, I think we ought to go to our room.

DOOLIN. (*A step up*) Not before the ceremony, surely? You mustn't be so shy.

HARRY. (*Rising and crossing to DOOLIN at c.*) See here! We're mighty sorry to have brought you out on a night like this, but there's nothing doing.

DOOLIN. Nothing doing? You mean there's to be no wedding?

HARRY. (*Settling matter, casually*) It's all off.

(*GERTRUDE and BETTY up R. C. TOM rear of table C. DICK sits contentedly in chair by fireplace down R.*)

DOOLIN. (*With dangerous, polite concern*) You don't tell me so!

NORAH. (*Entering L. 2 and coming down to DOOLIN's L.*) What's the matter? It's not all over already?

(*RANJE enters L. 2 on NORAH's heels and comes down L. to front.*)

DOOLIN. (*With injured dignity*) Mrs. Ranje, it appears there's been a joke played on me. There's no justice of the peace needed here because there's to be no wedding.

NORAH. (*Disappointed*) No wedding?

HARRY. Not to-night at any rate. (*Turns R.*)

DOOLIN. One moment, young man! (*HARRY pauses, looking at DOOLIN. Calmly*) It's not as easy as all that! (*Judicially*) You've made up your mind not to get married? Well, as a justice of the peace, I've nothing to say against that. But in my private capacity, as owner of this place, I'd like to know *when you intend to leave?*

HARRY. To leave?

TOM. (*Smiling, no thought of leaving*) We don't intend to leave.

HARRY. (*Smilingly*) We intend to stay here for the night.

(*GERTRUDE and BETTY agree.*)

DOOLIN. You'll not stay here to-night, or any other night. I'm the owner of this place. And I intend to see that it's kept—respectable.

(*All start.*)

HARRY. (*Tensely, hit line*) What the devil do you mean by that?

DOOLIN. (*Laying down the law*) There's one couple here that isn't married or you wouldn't have sent for me. And that same couple has got to be married if you're to stay here. (*Pause*) That's clear enough, isn't it?

HARRY. But the girls can't go out in this weather!

NORAH. (*Jumping in*) Sure, they're far too delicate, Mr. Doolin.

DOOLIN. (*Turning to NORAH*) If they were decent, respectable, married people I'd have nothing to say against them. But as they're not—out they go.

DICK. (*Joyfully—rising*) That's the talk. We'll ride over and catch the first train. How far is the nearest station?

NORAH. (*Sharply, doesn't want to lose custom*) It's too late now! There's no more local trains down to-night.

DICK. Well, if you can tie that. (*Turns R. Disgustedly. DOOLIN starts L.*)

HARRY. (*Takes DOOLIN by the arm, and leads him R. and front, reasoningly*) Now, see here. You don't look like a bad sort. This is a rotten night. And the girls simply can't go out in this weather. They must remain here. (*DOOLIN with compressed lips, shakes head inflexibly. Gets idea, takes bills from pocket, and puts one in DOOLIN's right hand*) Now, do you understand?

DOOLIN. (*Looks at bill, denomination suits him*) Sure! Why didn't you explain it that way before!

HARRY. (*Turning triumphantly to face trio up R. C.*) It's all right. We stay here. (*Taking R. C. a bit*)

TOM. (*Delightedly down R. C. a step*) We do?

(*GERTRUDE and BETTY come down R. C. delightedly. DICK is angry.*)

DOOLIN. (*Crossing to NORAH*) That depends

on Mr. and Mrs. Ranje. I'm not so sure that they have rooms enough for the lot of you.

NORAH. (*Indicates L. U.*) And why not? The ladies can have the bedroom together. (*Crossing to R. lower end table c. indicating R. 2*) And the gentlemen will find comfortable places in that private room.

HARRY. (*Comes down R. c. stopping NORAH*) One moment.

TOM. Oh, it doesn't matter where we sleep.

HARRY. Did I understand you to say that there is only this other room? (*Indicating R. c.*)

NORAH. Yes, sir. (*HARRY turns R. to DICK. DICK rises, turns to HARRY. HARRY and DICK glare at each other*)

DICK. (*To NORAH*) How many beds?

NORAH. Just the one.

HARRY and DICK. (*In unison*) Where are you going to sleep?

NORAH. We've no other place except the garage.

HARRY. (*To DICK, pointedly*) You might find that convenient.

DICK. All right. I would rather sleep in the car than be in the same room with you! (*Crossing along front down L.*) Where is the garage?

NORAH. (*To DICK as he crosses her*) Around the corner to the right, Ranje! Go show him where it is. (*Indicating garage as being off up c. DICK exits down L. RANJE with deep bow exits down L. after DICK*)

DOOLIN. (*At down L. c. turns to all*) Good night to you.

HARRY, BETTY, TOM, and GERTRUDE. Good-night.

DOOLIN. (*Beckoning to NORAH*) Mrs. Ranje!

NORAH. Yes? (*Crossing to DOOLIN*)

DOOLIN. (*Taking NORAH by arm and talking as he takes her off down L.*) I want you to keep an

eye open and see that nothing happens here to-night.
(NORAH and DOOLIN exit down L.)

TOM. (Coming rear of table c. and down L. c.)
Well, I think we had better all turn in. You girls
must be pretty tired. (Holds by table down L. c.
HARRY comes stealthily up to BETTY up R. c. and take
toward chair down R.)

GERTRUDE. I know I am. I'm going right to bed.
Come along, Betty. (Turn toward staircase up L.
c.)

HARRY. (Holding BETTY in arms down R.)
Why, it's early yet. We're not a bit sleepy. Are we
Sweetheart?

BETTY. No. (HARRY sits in chair down R. draws
BETTY to its L. arm)

GERTRUDE. (Facing HARRY at up c.) She's all
worn out after the excitement she's been through.

HARRY. You go to bed if you like. We're going
to sit up awhile. (Business, love to BETTY)

GERTRUDE. You'll do nothing of the kind!
(Down R. and seizes BETTY'S L. hand, takes her up
c.) I'm much too tired to chaperone you two at
this hour of the night! (BETTY held by GERTRUDE,
is dragged on run up c. HARRY holding on to
BETTY'S R. hand stumbles up, all three forming
chain, releases hold at up c. Taking BETTY up to
staircase L. c.) Come on, Betty. (To TOM at
down L. c.) Good night, dear.

TOM. Nighty night!

(BETTY and HARRY in loving pantomime as BETTY
is hurried off.)

GERTRUDE. (Turning on stairs to HARRY at c.)
'Night, Harry!

HARRY. (Savagely) Good night! (Lightning
off up c. GERTRUDE and BETTY exit L. U. closing
door. Start shot rain effect off L. HARRY pauses,

notices thunder and rain, looks L. U. gets a bright idea, comes down to table at L. C.) Tom, you'd better go down to the garage and see that the cars are all right.

TOM. (*Not wanting to go out in storm*) Why? Dick is down there.

HARRY. That is why! It would be just like him to put mine out of commission. (*TOM sulkily, takes up coat and cap, turns L. HARRY stopping TOM*) Here. (*Taking TOM up L. C. toward up c. entrance*) You can go out this way. It's nearer. (*Hurries to staircase, newel post, calls off L. C.*) Betty! Betty! (*Sotto voce*)

TOM. (*Sulkily*) Oh, all right. (*As HARRY leaves him at up c. he gives a sharp glance at HARRY, comes down to table and steals chicken drumstick, puts it in pocket and goes up to c. doors. Peering out c. doors. Thunder off c.*) Lord, but it's a rotten night! (*BETTY enters stealthily L. U. and comes down staircase to HARRY, with romantic delight*) Aren't you coming with me?

HARRY. (*Loving pantomime with BETTY, is about to kiss her*) I'll be there in a minute.

TOM. (*Comes down a step, sees BETTY and HARRY. Disgustedly*) Oh, save that stuff until you're married. (*Turns up coat collar and exits up c. and off to R. He has put on coat up c. during BETTY'S entrance. Stop shot rain effect off L. BETTY on staircase leaning over facing front, at newel post, following scene is played in extravagant romantic mood*)

HARRY. (*Back to audience looking up at BETTY*) Good night, sweetheart. We'll make up for everything to-morrow.

BETTY. Do you know, dear, I just feel as if we were never going to be left alone, again. Just think! This was to have been such a romantic night.

HARRY. I am just as disappointed as you are, angel!

BETTY. You'll think of me to-night, dearest. Promise me you will.

HARRY. Your face will be before me every minute of it, My Angel.

BETTY. And I'll dream of you, darling. (HARRY reaching up to kiss BETTY)

GERTRUDE. (*Sing line off L. U.*) Betty! (HARRY and BETTY break, disappointedly, business look L. U., then draw apart lingering hands grasped looking love at one another)

BETTY. Good night. (*Goes slowly up staircase. HARRY slowly drawing away to c. doors. Sotto voce*) Harry. (*Comes stealthily down the staircase to landing*)

HARRY. (*Stealthily across to BETTY; embrace*) My darling!

GERTRUDE. (*Off L. U.*) Betty! (BETTY and HARRY look L. U. when about to kiss, then there is a long kiss. *Impatiently off L. U.*) Betty! (BETTY and HARRY pay no attention, hold in kiss, break slowly. HARRY looking at BETTY, arm outstretched)

BETTY. (*Slowly backing up staircase, at door L. U. gently*) Good night.

HARRY. Good night. (*Blows kiss. BETTY backs off L. U. reluctantly, slowly closing door. HARRY holds an instant, sighs regretfully; goes to up c., turns up coat collar and exits up c. and off to R.*)

(*Light off L. I out.*)

NORAH. (*Off L. I*) Now remember what Mr. Doolin says. (*Enters down L.*) I'll be in the kitchen if you need me. (RANJE enters down L. on NORAH's heels, goes across to table c.; fixes hair. NORAH turns out bracket light above door down L.)

(Foots and border down one-fourth L. foot light strip out.)

RANJE. *(L. of c. table turning out c. hanging lamp)* Am I to sleep here?

NORAH. *(Above table L. c.—sharply)* You're not to sleep at all!

(Foots and border down one-half more.)

RANJE. *(Sulkily turns up R. c. At table c. gets NORAH tray of food, etc.)* Keep your eyes open and your wits about you. And when they leave, you're to forget nothing for what they've had. Remember, it's Providence sent those bottles to my hand, and He meant us to get the money for Mr. Doolin. *(Goes to L. 2 turns, tray in hand. RANJE comes slowly down toward chair R.)*

NORAH. You can stay in that chair. But if you feel yourself getting sleepy—get up and walk. Only, don't wake me up!

RANJE. I am what you call the "Patsy!" *(Sulkily slams chair down R. on floor)*

NORAH. I wish to God your name was Patsy! *(Exits L. 2)*

(Light off L. 2. Moment after exit. RANJE glances sulkily at NORAH, then turns out up-stage bracket light over mantel down R. Footlight strip R. c. out foots and border down an eighth. Goes to bracket light down-stage mantel R. turns it off. Footlights strip R. out and border and foots down to lowest dimmer notch. Sits in chair by fireplace, down R. on L. leg, uncomfortable business, turns, faces fireplace, sitting on R. leg, shuffles into comfortable position. Distant auto horn off up L. near back wall three times—start motor effect—auto horn and motor louder and louder—to height—fire revolver—

air escape—stop horn—motor runs on a few moments, stop. At shot, RANJE falls out of chair to floor runs down to imaginary window down R. C. lifts imaginary shade, peers out, then comes hurriedly to C. table and turns on C. hanging lamp. Foot and border full up also lights off all entrances except up C. Runs down to entrance down L. then stops, bowing delightedly and backing to up L. C. as he sees HATTIE off down L. HATTIE enters down L. the picture of dishevelment,—wet plumes broken and drooping, one heel of slipper off, gown dripping—muddy, and torn; carries mesh bag of ACT I, pauses dazed; whimpers, tired and worn out.)

RANJE. (*Politely, with deep bow*). Good evening, Madame.

HATTIE. Good evening. (*Breaks, whimperingly*) What place is this?

RANJE. This is Cherry Tree Inn, Madame. I am the proprietor. (*Trying to make an impression*)

HATTIE. (*Unenthusiastically*) Are you?

RANJE. Yes, Madame. The Prince Ranje Boule. Formerly of Sherry's.

HATTIE. (*Whimperingly, crossing to chair L. of table C.*) I am trying to find out where I am.

RANJE. I am telling you, Madame.

HATTIE. I know. The Cherry Tree Inn. But where, is it near?

RANJE. Near Oscawana.

HATTIE. (*Almost in tears*) I don't know any more now than I did before. Can you tell me how far it is to Wildwood?

RANJE. (*At a loss*) Wildwood?

HATTIE. Yes. It's somewhere near Poughkeepsie.

RANJE. Poughkeepsie is about forty miles further on.

HATTIE. (*Hopelessly sinking into chair*) Forty miles. Oh, dear, we'll never be able to make it to-night. We've smashed a wheel or something. (*Looking at gown,—whimperingly*) Look at my clothes!

RANJE. Oh, madame is wet! (*Hand on HATTIE's knee consolingly*)

HATTIE. (*Rising, snappily indignant*) Madame is very wet—and very mad! (*Whimperingly, squeezing water from gloves*) That's the leakiest taxi I was ever in.

RANJE. (*Crossing to R.*) Be seated, madame. Here, by the fire. (*Arranges chair*)

HATTIE. Thanks. (*Crossing toward chair down R.*)

RANJE. (*Helping HATTIE into chair down R.*) It is such a bad night!

HATTIE. (*In chair down R.*) I should say it is! I wonder if I could get a drink?

RANJE. Certainly, madame. What does the madame prefer?

HATTIE. Madame would prefer a cocktail if she could get it.

RANJE. At once, Madame. (*Turns up R. c. across rear, and exits L. 2*)

(*Lightning off up c. thunder.*)

HATTIE. Gee—what a night!

CHAUFFEUR. (*Enters blindly down L. water streaming off his long poncho puttees his shoes wet and muddy, leather cap soaked, face grimy; long leather gloves soaked and hair soaking wet, water streaming down face goes to c. taking cap off*) It's all right. Just a puncture. Want me to wait? (*Holds front, taking off gloves*)

HATTIE. (*Whimperingly*) No. No use trying to go any further to-night. This weather's awful.

CHAUFFEUR. (*Front*) Just as you say, miss. It's sixteen twenty so far.

HATTIE. (*Aghast*) Sixteen? Dollars?

CHAUFFEUR. (*Turning front casually*) Yes'm. (*Getting no answer, he turns testily to HATTIE*) You can look at the metre if you like. (*Holds*)

HATTIE. (*Helplessly rising*) What good would that do me. (*Slowly toward c. table opening and looking in meshbag but it is evident she has not the money to pay bill. CHAUFFEUR suspiciously sidles R. endeavoring to peer into bag. HATTIE sees CHAUFFEUR's action, closes bag with a snap. Indignantly*) I'll have the proprietor attend to it. (*RANJE enters L. 2 with tray on which is a martini cocktail, down L. c. CHAUFFEUR looks at HATTIE suspiciously, menacingly*)

RANJE. The cocktail—(*CHAUFFEUR hears word, turns L. sees cocktail, face brightens, steps toward RANJE, hand out to take cocktail. RANJE indignantly*) Madame! (*Moves down-stage, drawing tray away. CHAUFFEUR crosses disgustedly above RANJE, to down L. c. Back almost to foots and eyes HATTIE, waiting for his money. (RANJE at L. lower end table c. extending cocktail)*)

HATTIE. (*Taking cocktail*) Thank you. I'm chilled to the bone.

RANJE. The Cherry Tree Inn Cocktail!

HATTIE. (*Jollying RANJE along, at R. lower end table c.*) Is that the Tree or the Cherry? (*Indicating olive in cocktail. HATTIE drinks cocktail*) I don't suppose there's any use trying to go any further to-night. (*Gets idea, says to RANJE*) I wonder if you could take care of me, here? (*Cajolingly*) You have rooms, haven't you?

RANJE. (*Flirtingly, quick look L. 2 then to*

HATTIE) Oh, yes, Madame, but we have so many guests this evening!

HATTIE. (*Cajolingly. With her most enticing smile*) Then one more wouldn't matter, would it?

RANJE. Oh, no, madame. But I was thinking of a place to put you. (*Thinks, gets idea*) Ah! (*Crossing to R. 2*) Yes. You can have this room. (*Opens door, looks off, then says to HATTIE*) No. They have not come in yet. I was going to give it to the two gentlemen, but they can sleep in the garage.

HATTIE. (*Breath of relief*) Any place will do. I'm not fussy. Just so I can take off these wet things and lie down.

RANJE. (*Just L. of door R. 2 politely bowing*) Certainly, madame. This way, madame. (*Indicating R. 2. HATTIE crosses to door R. 2. As HATTIE crosses him*) It is not very nice.

HATTIE. (*Turning in doorway, jolly*) Don't apologize. I'm lucky to get anything at all on a night like this.

RANJE. (*Bowing*) Yes, madame. (*HATTIE turns R. to exit. CHAUFFEUR with commanding clearing of throat to HATTIE*)

HATTIE. (*Pauses, looks at CHAUFFEUR, as though she had just remembered. To RANJE, consolingly*) Oh! By the way, would you mind taking care of my taxi? Put it on my bill.

RANJE. Yes, Madame. (*Deep bow*)

HATTIE. Thanks. (*Exits R. 2 and closes door. CHAUFFEUR listening and eyeing them intently until RANJE agrees to pay bill, then relaxes, clears water out of eyes, moves R. RANJE obsequiously bows to HATTIE and backing c.*)

CHAUFFEUR. (*At down R. c. clapping RANJE on back*) Sixteen dollars and twenty cents.

RANJE. (*Business on getting clap on back; faces CHAUFFEUR indignantly*) What!

CHAUFFEUR. (*Facing RANJE commandingly*) Taxi fare! (*Pause*) You said you'd pay it.

RANJE. (*Aghast, at a loss, eyes CHAUFFEUR*) Sixteen dollars!

CHAUFFEUR. Well?

RANJE. Well, hang around for a little while. I will speak with my wife.

CHAUFFEUR. (*Eyes RANJE from head to foot, appraisingly*) All right. (*Crosses L.*) I'll be back as soon as I put in a new tube. (*Exits down L.*)

HATTIE. (*Opening door R. 2*) Oh, landlord.

RANJE. (*Turning up R. c.*) Yes, madame?

HATTIE. You might get me another drink, if the bar isn't closed.

RANJE. Another Cherry Tree Inn Cocktail, madame?

HATTIE. If you don't mind. Make it the Cherry, this time.

RANJE. At once, Madame. (*Turns up c. behind table c. to up L. c.*)

HATTIE. (*Seeing HARRY'S coat on chair down R.; comes down to chair*) Whose coat is that?

RANJE. (*Turning at up L. c.*) I do not know, madame.

HATTIE. (*Taking coat*) Do you mind if I use it? I want to take my dress off. It's so wet.

RANJE. (*Quickly, worriedly*) But the coat is not mine.

HATTIE. Well, I won't hurt it. (*Up to R. 2*)

RANJE. (*Expostulating*) But, madame!

HATTIE. Hurry up with that drink.

RANJE. Immediately, madame. (*Bows and exits L. 2.*) HATTIE *exits R. 2*)

(BETTY cautiously opens door L. U., peeks about room, tiptoes down-stairs with suit-case in left hand, and comes quickly down to front c. keep-

ing R. 2 in eye—she is in a kimono, with her hair down.)

GERTRUDE. (*Enters L. U. As BETTY gets to stair landing, follows her down*) Betty! (*Comes quickly down to BETTY at c.*) Betty! What are you doing? (*Holding suit-case*)

BETTY. I want Harry to have his bag. All his things are in it.

GERTRUDE. What's the sense in disturbing them now? They're both fast asleep by this time.

BETTY. (*Coaxingly*) I'm surry Harry is not. He never could sleep without his pyjamas.

GERTRUDE. (*Dismissingly*) Nonsense. Men can sleep in anything. That's the way you spoil him. Take my advice and leave him alone.

BETTY. (*Coaxingly, removing GERTRUDE's hand*) Just this once, dear.

GERTRUDE. (*Out of patience*) Oh, very well. If you want to make a little fool of yourself. (*Going up L. c.*) But I'm going back to bed. (*Up and exits L. U. closing door*)

BETTY. (*Crosses to lintel of door R. 2 leans against it facing front, with an adoring smile, knocks on door lightly*) Harry. (*Pauses, knocks again,—a little louder*) Harry, dear.

HATTIE. (*Loudly, off R. E. 2 thinking it is RANJE with drink*) All right! Just leave it there.

BETTY. (*Scream of horror, starts back, drops suitcase, flies to stairs*) Gertrude! Gertrude! (*Starts up, changes mind, starts R. then upstairs; marches to R. 2 and pounds on door*)

HATTIE. Say! What's the matter with you? (*Opens door R. 2, sees BETTY, screams; exits R. 2 slamming door*)

BETTY. (*With loud scream on seeing HATTIE starts back; runs to stairs up L.*) Gertrude! Gertrude! There's a woman in there! (*Flies upstairs and exits L. U. TOM enters casually up c. dripping*

wet, takes off cap and slaps water off clothes; goes to door R. 2 and exits)

GERTRUDE. (*Entering L. U. talking back off L. U. as she comes down-stairs*) You stay where you are, Betty. You're excited. I'll see who she is. (*Crosses rear table toward R. 2. HATTIE loud scream off R. 2. TOM comes tumbling out of R. 2 closing door; goes to chair down R. GERTRUDE jumps behind curtains to doors up C. and peeks out watching TOM. TOM looking over R. shoulder at R. 2. Crosses front to down L. on tiptoes taking long steps and exits quickly. GERTRUDE agonized, coming from behind curtains*) Oh, this is awful! (*Running upstairs up L. C.*) Betty! Betty! (*Exits L. U. HARRY enters up C. casually, wet, bareheaded, unbuttoning waistcoat, and untying tie as he goes down R. C. and into room R. 2*)

BETTY. (*Enters L. U. calling off L. U. over shoulder as she comes down-stairs*) No, dear. You stay where you are. You are too excited.

HATTIE. (*Loudly off R. 2*) Well! Talk about luck!

HARRY. (*Loudly off R. 2*) What the devil—!

HATTIE. (*Loudly off R. 2*) Thought you'd get away from me, did you?

BETTY. (*On hearing HARRY's voice, stops aghast, then runs upstairs, and calls*) Gertrude! Gertrude! (*GERTRUDE enters L. U.*) It's Harry! (*Takes GERTRUDE down-stairs*)

HARRY. (*Entering R. 2 hurriedly, backing out*) Be quiet, for—!

HATTIE. (*Entering R. 2*) Not till I get what's coming to me!

HARRY. (*Down R. C.*) Keep away from me—keep away!

(*BETTY and GERTRUDE off stairs and down L. C.*)

HATTIE *seeing girls, screams and runs off* R. 2 *closing door.*)

BETTY. (*Down L. C.*) Harry!

HARRY. (*Faces BETTY. Foolishly*) Betty——

BETTY. What is that woman doing here?

HARRY. (*With guilt of innocence*) I don't know. I'm just as surprised to see her as you are.

BETTY. Do you expect me to believe that?

HARRY. I give you my word.

BETTY. Don't lie. Thank goodness, I found you out before we were married! (*Crying, goes to GERTRUDE, down L. C.*) Take me home! I don't want to stay here another minute.

HARRY. But Betty! Listen! (*To front c. l. appealingly. DICK enters down L. raincoat and cap wet*)

BETTY. (*Sobbingly, runs to DICK*) Dick!

DICK. (*Meeting and taking BETTY in arms just R. of table L. C.*) What's the matter?

GERTRUDE. That awful woman is here. He's got her in that room. (*Indicating HARRY and R. 2*)

DICK. What! (*Crossing BETTY toward HARRY*) You infernal scoundrel!

HARRY. (*Rushing toward DICK*) You keep out of this.

GERTRUDE. (*Raises hand to HARRY; restrains DICK*) Dick! Control yourself. Remember! Your sister needs you. (*HARRY pauses c.*)

TOM. (*Enters gaily down L. steps down*) Hello! What's going on? (*Dead pause*)

GERTRUDE. (*Crossing to TOM*) Don't ever speak to me again! You—you libertine!

TOM. Why—what have I done?

BETTY. (*To DICK, into his R. arm*) Take me home! I want to go now. (*Crying—back to foots*)

GERTRUDE. Take me, too! (*Crying goes to DICK's arm, back to foots. TOM stands uncomprehending*)

DICK. All right. Get your things together and I'll have the car ready in a jiffy.

HARRY. No, you don't! You're not going to leave until this thing is explained.

TOM. You bet you're not!

DICK. I'd like to see anything stop us, that's all. (*Terrific crash of thunder and blinding flash of lightning. All flinch at bolt. Off up c. throw iron bar to iron plate on blocks. Fire shotgun—lightning crash on thunder drum and die away in reverberations. BETTY screams and starts toward HARRY. GERTRUDE screams and starts toward TOM. HARRY and TOM stretch out arms to take girls. DICK pulls both girls back into his arms. Dead pause*)

HARRY. (*Breaking R. c.*) By Jove! That was—close!

RANJE. (*Runs on L. 2 excitedly, to up c.*) What was it? What was it?

HARRY. Lightning-bolt! Must have hit near here!

HATTIE. (*Entering R. 2 and going toward HARRY*) What was that? I'm afraid!

HARRY. (*Jumping away from HATTIE*) You keep away from me.

NORAH. (*Enters alarmed from L. 2—nightgown and kimono; hair in curl papers*) For the love of heaven, what's happened?

RANJE. (*Yelling off up c. to R., and rushing down R. c.*) Fire! Fire! Fire! Fire! It is the garage! The garage is on fire!

ALL. On fire! How?

RANJE. Struck by lightning!

DICK. Impossible! Our automobiles are down there!

HARRY. Get them out!

TOM. We must get out the cars. (*Up L. c. to rear table c.*)

DICK. Where's the fire station?

NORAH. (*Coming down L. c.*) Holy murder! Call out the firemen!

HARRY. Where are they?

NORAH. Croton! That's nearest!

DICK. Well, telephone, quick! (*Goes to wall telephone below door down L. and begins calling*)

TOM. Quick, fellows! Get something to put the fire out!

HARRY. Lend a hand, everybody! (*Rushes to mantel R., snatches vase, and gives it to TOM*)

(*HATTIE following HARRY throughout and getting vase down-stage end of mantel R., and giving it to TOM.*)

NORAH. Give me the Croton Fire Department—quick!

TOM. Where's the fire-hose? Where's the hose?

RANJE. I will find it! (*Rushes off L. 2*)

DICK. (*Gets huge bowl from sideboard, and castor; gives them to TOM*) Get the fire buckets!

GERTRUDE. Where are they? (*BETTY rushes up-R. 2. HATTIE exits R. 2 after HARRY. GERTRUDE exits L. 2. TOM rear of table ad lib.; keeping what things he selects, throwing other things people bring him to floor*)

stairs and exits L. U.; gets water pitcher down-stairs, and gives it to TOM)

TOM. Don't waste time!

HARRY. Get anything that'll carry water. (*Exits*)

NORAH. This the engine house? Come quick! We're on fire! The Cherry Tree Inn! Near Oscawana! Yes. It's the Prince's place. Hurry up!

TOM. (*Arms filled, starts up c.*) Come on, everybody! (*Exits up c., off to R.*)

(*RANJE rushes on L. 2 with coil of hose to down R. c., ad lib, hurrying up everyone. DICK grabs*

decanter from sideboard and exits after TOM. GERTRUDE rushes on L. 2 and exits after DICK carrying mixing pan. BETTY rushes down-stairs with water pitcher and exits after GERTRUDE. RANJE goes up R. C. and exits after BETTY. HARRY rushes on R. 2 with slop pail, ad lib, and exits after RANJE. HATTIE rushes on R. 2 with cover to slop pail and exits after HARRY.)

(NOTE: On this exit, time it so that from Tom to Hattie there is a continuous line of people.)

NORAH. Yes. The Cherry Tree Inn. Near Oscawana. We're burning up.

(Ad lib to curtain.)

Call 1—All.

" 2—Gertrude, Tom, Harry, and Betty.

" 3—Betty and Harry.

Curtain

ACT III

AT RISE: NORAH, *talking angrily into 'phone.*

NORAH. Hullo! It's the Cherry Tree Inn! I want to know if the fire automobile has started yet? (*Pause*) A few minutes ago? (*Pause*) Well, I called up to tell you that it's too late to do any good now. (*DOOLIN enters up c. from off R. dirty and wet; face covered with cinders and soot; hears NORAH, comes down R. c.*) It's all burnt down. (*Hangs up receiver*)

DOOLIN. (*Front c. by table sharply*) Who's that you're talking too?

NORAH. (*Toward DOOLIN*) The engine-house at Croton. The firemen are on their way now in their automobile wagon.

DOOLIN. (*Sharply*) And who wants an automobile wagon? I don't. (*Grinning happily through his grime*) That garage is burnt to the ground, with everything in it.

NORAH. Well, you can't blame us, Mr. Doolin, we did our best to put it out.

DOOLIN. (*Sharply*) It's a good thing for me you didn't put it out. (*Rubs hands cheerfully*)

(*RANJE enters up c. from off R. grimy and wet; comes down R.*)

DOOLIN. This is the first bit of luck I've had this year! (*Beckoning R. to RANJE*) Here! Ranje!

RANJE. (*Quickly—to DOOLIN's R.*) Yes, sir?

DOOLIN. I want you to make out a list of everything that was destroyed in that garage!

RANJE. There was nothing in the garage but the gentlemen's automobiles.

DOOLIN. (*Angrily, facing RANJE*) What's that?

NORAH. (*Crossing to L. lower end table c.—sharply to RANJE*) Shut up! Haven't you any instinct for business at all! (*RANJE at a loss*)

DOOLIN. (*Pointedly, to RANJE*) You'll please to remember that I put my new buggy in that garage, only this morning. And if I succeed in collecting my insurance there'll be a percentage deducted from what you owe me. Come in here. (*Swings RANJE across him to his L. starting him up L. c. NORAH starting up L. c. Quickly. As they all go up L. c.*) We'll make out a list before the firemen come. (*NORAH at L. 2*)

RANJE. (*Up L. c. turns to DOOLIN, pausing*) But I do not understand!

(*HARRY starts on up c. from off R. dirty and wet.*)

DOOLIN. Your wife will translate it for you!

HARRY. Here! (*DOOLIN pauses, facing HARRY. Angrily, crossing to DOOLIN*) I want to see you a minute!

DOOLIN. (*Harshly*) Well? What's your complaint?

HARRY. (*Angrily*) I want to know what you meant by interfering with us down at that garage? If it hadn't been for you, we'd have had that fire out!

DOOLIN. And who wanted it out? I didn't. (*Turns L.*)

HARRY. What about our automobiles?

DOOLIN. (*Facing HARRY*) They're insured, ain't they?

HARRY. Yes, but—

DOOLIN. Then what the hell are you kicking about? (*Exits L. 2*)

HARRY. (*Front*) Well, of all the nerve!

TOM. (*Enters angrily up c. from off R., wet and*

dirty, coming R. c. to front) Well! This is a fine mess! Both cars gone, and no way of getting out of this hole!

HARRY. (*To front of table down c.*) Where are the girls?

TOM. (*Sarcastically*) Scratching among the ruins—for a medicine-chest. (*Bitingly*) Dick's cut his face.

HARRY. (*Heartily*) I wish it'd been his throat!

TOM. (*Crossing to HARRY*) I don't mind losing my car, but Gertrude won't even let me speak to her.

HARRY. Betty won't let me come within a mile of her.

TOM. (*Worried—to HARRY*) Say old man, what's a libertine?

HARRY. (*Puzzled*) Libertine? Why?

TOM. Gertrude says I'm one.

HARRY. It doesn't matter what she says you are! You're married and she can't get away. (*Crossing TOM to down R.*) But I am only nearly married.

TOM. (*At front c., turns to face HARRY*) You'll pardon me, old man, but I warned you that that King woman would make trouble for you.

HARRY. (*Facing TOM*) Well, I didn't know she was coming on my honeymoon with me, did I?

TOM. And I didn't know she was going to ring me in, either.

HARRY. (*Crosses to TOM at c.*) How do you suppose she ever found out that I'd started for Wildwood, anyway?

TOM. (*Up L. c. guiltily; bent on getting away from HARRY*) I haven't the remotest idea.

HARRY. (*Facing front, with determination*) Well, we've got to find some way to get rid of her.

(*HATTIE enters quickly, angrily up c. from off R. and down R. c. to front.*)

TOM. (*Up L. c. seeing HATTIE enter*) Excuse me! (*Comedy—hustle, off L. 2*)

HARRY. (*Turns R. sees HATTIE*) Oh, Lord! (*Goes quickly toward door down L.*)

HATTIE. (*Sharply, to front c.*) Here! Wait a minute! I want to see you!

HARRY. (*Facing HATTIE at door down L.*) I'm not crazy about seeing you just now!

HATTIE. You don't get away from here till I get my money.

HARRY. (*Pause*) Your money? (*Pause, then crosses to HATTIE*) Is that what you came for?

HATTIE. (*Sarcastically*) Oh, no! I came to see the scenery, on a wet night!

HARRY. I'll have my lawyer send you a check as soon as I get back to town. (*Crosses to down L.*)

HATTIE. (*Sharply*) Nothing doing.

HARRY. (*Reasoning as he faces HATTIE*) See here, I don't carry thousand-dollar bills around with me! How do you expect me to get it?

HATTIE. That is your business.

HARRY. Well, if this isn't the darndest luck! (*Gets idea, crosses to HATTIE*) How did you ever find out where I'd gone?

HATTIE. (*Casually*) I found out from Tom Robinson.

HARRY. (*Surprised*) Tom! So he told you, eh! (*Gloatingly turns up L. c. hands clinched, looking L. E. Stops, with sudden idea. Comes to HATTIE*) Will you go if I get the money for you?

HATTIE. That's all I'm waiting for.

HARRY. Very well. (*Crosses HATTIE to R. and turns, taking her R. c. a bit*) You get your things on and I'll have it for you by the time you get back.

HATTIE. (*Hopeful, but doubting*) On the level?

HARRY. (*Taking HATTIE R. 2*) Yes, but hurry.

HATTIE. (*Going R. 2*) All right. I'll take one more chance. (*HARRY hustles HATTIE off R. 2; closes door*)

TOM. (*Entering L. 2 with glass full of water, stealthily looking about,—all smiles*) Has she gone? (*HARRY at R. 2 turns to face TOM; crouches; with blazing eyes, set face, hands clinched, strides menacingly rear of table c. to TOM at up L. c. TOM's smile fades to questioning fear*)

HARRY. (*Grips TOM's right wrist*) You damned liar! (*Drags TOM down to below table c. TOM at a loss, starts to drink water. Standing at R. lower corner table c.*) Lend me a thousand dollars!

TOM. (*Starts; water from glass flies over him*) A thousand dollars, what for? (*Sets glass of water on table behind him*)

HARRY. Never mind! I must have it!

TOM. (*Opening pocketbook*) Won't a couple of hundred do?

HARRY. No, I must have the exact amount. (*Looks in pocket-book*) What's that, a blank check?

TOM. Yes. I always carry one in case of emergencies. (*Takes blank check out of pocket-book*)

HARRY. Fine! (*Slams TOM into chair lower R. end table c.; gives him stylographic pen*) Here! Here's a stylographic pen.

TOM. (*Starts to make out check,—testily*) Wait a minute! You haven't told me what it's for?

HARRY. (*Standing rear of TOM to R., in matter of fact tone*) For a thousand dollars.

TOM. Oh. (*Starts to write*)

HARRY. Make it out to bearer.

TOM. (*Suddenly facing HARRY*) My God! That's not our hotel bill!

HARRY. Oh, hurry up! (*Swings TOM around to business*)

TOM. (*Testily*) All right! All right! But don't fluster me! (*Starts to write; hair gets in eyes; tosses head*)

HARRY. (*Seizes TOM's front hair, holds it back, and his head as well*) I'll keep your hair out of your eyes. One thousand dollars. (*TOM writing check, head back, eyes strained down to follow his writing*) To bearer—now sign it! (*Grabs check the moment TOM signs*)

TOM. (*As he signs check, he rises, and passes pen to HARRY*) There you are.

HARRY. Good. (*Pockets pen, urges TOM up c.*) Now you get Dick away from the girls. That'll give me a chance at Betty! (*Turns L. above table c.*)

TOM. (*Turns in doorway up c., raging*) But—where do I come in?

HARRY. You don't come in. (*Turns TOM and pushes him off up c. to R.*) You—go out! (*TOM exits up c. off to R. HARRY goes to door R. 2, knocks; then quickly jumps back to R. lower end table c.*) Are you ready?

HATTIE. (*Entering R. 2 dressed to go*) Did you get it? (*Comes down to HARRY*)

HARRY. Yes. Here it is. (*Slams check into her hand, swings her to his L.*)

HATTIE. (*Suspiciously holds c.*) Oh! A check?

HARRY. (*Urging HATTIE L.*) It's perfectly good.

HATTIE. But I need cash.

HARRY. (*Urging HATTIE L.*) Your chauffeur will cash it for you.

HATTIE. (*Holds down L. c.*) Yes, but wait a minute!

HARRY. (*Hurriedly*) Haven't time to discuss it now. I've got to get away from here myself.

HATTIE. But I need some cash. My taxi has been buzzing its head off all night.

HARRY. (*Pushing HATTIE L.*) Show your chauffeur that check and he'll take you from here to 'Frisco.

HATTIE. But I don't want to go to 'Frisco.

(HARRY pushes HATTIE off down L. HATTIE exits angrily down L.)

BETTY. (*Enters up c. from off R.*) Oh, the poor darling! Bring him right down here. (*Coming toward chair down R. HARRY faces up c.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Enters with DICK up c. from off R., bringing him on*) Now Dick! (*DICK is brought on by GERTRUDE expostulating*)

BETTY. Bring him down here by the fire. (*Faces chair down R. to c. and front, to its L.*)

DICK. (*Coming down R. c. Testily*) Please! Please don't make a fuss over me! I don't like it. (*GERTRUDE brings DICK R. to chair. HARRY comes slowly toward table front c.*)

BETTY. (*Solicitously, to DICK, at his right*) Let me see. (*Looks at his cheek*) Oh! It's bleeding!

DICK. (*Impatiently*) Don't get excited! It's nothing at all.

BETTY. We must put something on it!

HARRY. Try some mange cure. (*DICK doubles up fists, glares angrily at HARRY; starts toward him*)

BETTY. (*Restraining DICK*) Don't pay any attention to him, dear. (*With a bitter look at HARRY*) Hasn't anybody some liniment?

GERTRUDE. I'll ask the Princess. (*Turns up R. c.*)

BETTY. (*Running to GERTRUDE*) No! Wait! There's some witch-hazel and a strip of linen in my bag!

GERTRUDE. All right, I'll get them. (*Goes rear upstairs, and exits L. U.*)

BETTY. (*Down to L. of DICK*) Why, Dick! You're soaking wet!

HARRY. So is everybody else.

BETTY. (*Indignant, looks at HARRY, patting DICK*) Sit over here by the fire, so you can dry out.

DICK. (*Impatiently*) Please don't make a fuss over me. I don't like it!

BETTY. Take off your coat. (*Starts pulling off his coat*) We must hang it up to dry. It's sure to give you a cold if you keep it on.

DICK. (*Allowing BETTY to take off his coat*) Oh, bother! What's the sense of that? (*BETTY hangs coat over back of chair down R.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Enters L. U., with bottle of witch-hazel and linen; comes downstairs across rear and down R. C.*) Here's the witch-hazel.

BETTY. Let me have it. (*Crosses to GERTRUDE, takes witch-hazel and linen. DICK sits in chair down R. pettishly*)

GERTRUDE. (*Giving BETTY witch-hazel and linen; solicitously*) Is it still bleeding?

DICK. No. It's only a scratch!

BETTY. (*Down to L. of DICK, taking stopper out of bottle and turning liquid on linen*) You don't know anything about it! It may lead to blood-poisoning!

HARRY. Good! (*Dances delightedly up and down at c. front. DICK bends forward angrily in chair, eyeing HARRY, starts to rise*)

BETTY. (*Restrains DICK as he is about to rise*) Never mind him, dear. We'll have it cauterized as soon as we get home.

HARRY. (*Delighted*) That'll help some! (*DICK angrily starts to rise*)

BETTY. Now Dick! (*Keeps DICK in chair, crosses to GERTRUDE*) Gertrude! Would you mind looking in my bag again? You'll find some absorbent cotton.

GERTRUDE. All right. (*Goes up across rear, upstairs and exits L. U. BETTY turns down to DICK dumping more witch-hazel on linen and plumps the wad on DICK's left cheek and holds it there*)

DICK. (*Yells with pain, squirming about in*

chair) Ouch! Oh, for the love of Heaven!
(HARRY is down-stage dancing up and down)

BETTY. (*Holding pad to DICK's cheek*) It's for your good, Dick. It's for your own good!

HARRY. (*Sarcastically*) Of course it is! The poor pampered darling!

BETTY. (*Indignantly facing HARRY*) Do you object, Mr. Lindsey?

HARRY. I object to any man receiving the attentions that are rightfully mine!

DICK. Object and be hanged!

HARRY. (*Mysteriously, coming R. a little*) You'll meet your death in a far more terrible form than hanging if you keep on. (DOOLIN enters L. 2 and crosses rear toward up c.)

DICK. I dare say I will if you have your way about it.

BETTY. Please stop talking like that! Anyone would think that you wanted to murder each other. (DOOLIN about to exit up c. hears "Murder" turns front, tense and alert, comes down listening to scene)

HARRY. I could murder him cheerfully—and with the greatest pleasure. (DOOLIN comes down R. c. a step)

DICK. (*Leaning forward in chair*) I'm not so sure that you haven't already tried it.

BETTY. (*Tensely, eagerly*) What do you mean, Dick?

DICK. (*Leaning forward in chair, pointing finger at HARRY; impressively*) It was his suggestion that I sleep in that garage!

HARRY. (*Starts back a step*) Do you mean to insinuate that I set fire to the place? (DOOLIN down R. c. listening intently)

DICK. You've just admitted your desire to have me out of the way!

HARRY. Why, you young pup! (*Starts toward*

DICK *angrily, hands clinched. DICK rises, angry*)

BETTY. (*Restraining DICK*) Please! Please! (*Fends HARRY away from DICK with L. hand. Pause*) Remember! He's weak and ill! (*HARRY breaks back to front c.*)

DICK. (*Like a small boy*) I'm not afraid of him.

BETTY. (*Indignantly*) You ought to be ashamed of yourself to strike a wounded man! (*GERTRUDE enters L. U. with cotton batton, comes down-stairs, toward L. c.*)

HARRY. (*Taken aback. Seriously, like a small boy*) I didn't strike him! But I won't let any man accuse me of a thing like that. He's got to apologize.

DICK. I won't apologize.

HARRY. Then I'll make you. (*Springs toward DICK. DICK starts toward HARRY*)

DOOLIN. (*Steps between HARRY and BETTY*) Here! Wait a minute! The both of you!

BETTY. (*Restraining DICK*) Stop, Dick, stop!

GERTRUDE. (*To table front at c.*) What are you two idiots trying to do? (*DICK into chair down R.*)

DOOLIN. (*To DICK*) What do you mean by saying a thing like that? I heard you!

HARRY. He said that I set fire to your garage. (*DOOLIN nods*)

BETTY. (*To DOOLIN, defending DICK*) He didn't mean it. You ought to have known he didn't.

DOOLIN. (*A step R.*) He'd better not mean it. (*To DICK*) I'll ask you to be more careful of your remarks, young man. Remember, it'll make a lot of trouble for me in collecting my insurance, if such things get to the ears of the company.

DICK. (*Airing knowledge, with no antipathy*) Hah! You can't collect any insurance on this fire. It was an "Act of God"—and that invalidates your claim.

DOOLIN. (*Dismissingly*) You're crazy!

DICK. Am I? Well, just look up your policy—and unless there's a special clause against lightning and wind, you'll find I'm right.

DOOLIN. How do you know?

DICK. It's my business to know: I'm a lawyer.

DOOLIN. (*Impressed*) Then I've no claim at all!

DICK. None whatever!

DOOLIN. Holy Murder!

HARRY. (*At front c. below table, facing front, choking and doubling up with laughter*) Serves him right! (*Laughing—to GERTRUDE*) He wouldn't let us put out the fire! (*With gale of laughter doubles up on table. DOOLIN with menacing frown as HARRY starts laughing; eyes him, walks slowly to front c.; holds, till HARRY is thru laughing. HARRY rises from table choking with laughter, his face in DOOLIN's; sees latter's countenance; laugh dies away*)

DOOLIN. So! It was you who set fire to my place, was it?

HARRY. (*Breaks back a step L. in utter astonishment*) What!

DOOLIN. (*Menacingly*) Come on, now! You may as well admit it! I heard what your friend here just said and you'll find it easier to settle with me than with a court of law.

HARRY. Oh—oh, go to the devil! (*Turns to down L. by door*)

DOOLIN. (*Front c. laying down the law, ragingly*) I will not! I'll make out a warrant for your arrest! And if you don't make me a reasonable offer, off you go to jail!

RANJE. (*Enters L. 2 with list on paper*) Here is the list! (*To rear table c.*)

NORAH. (*Enters L. 2 on RANJE's heels, coming to table c.*) We've tried to remember everything you told us.

DOOLIN. It's no good to me now. Tear it up!
(NORAH starts toward L. 2 a step) But, Mrs. Ranje—

NORAH. Yes, sir? (*Pause, and faces DOOLIN*)

DOOLIN. I'd advise you to make out your bill and—(*Eyeing HARRY pointedly*) collect it, if you can!

NORAH. I'll do that same—(*Exits L. 2 quickly*)

DOOLIN. (*Menacingly pounding on table,—to HARRY*) You will not be leaving this place till I get my money. (*Going up R. c. on run*) Come along, Ranje. We'll see if we can get a constable. (*Beckoning to RANJE exits up c. and off to R. on the run. RANJE follows after DOOLIN. HARRY worried, at a loss, goes up L. c. and to up c. after RANJE and DOOLIN*)

DICK. (*Chortling*) Ha, ha! I guess I put you in, all right! (*HARRY up c. faces DICK angrily*)

GERTRUDE. (*Front c. resignedly, angrily*) Well, I don't see that there's anything to do now but to go to our room—and wait!

BETTY. You'd better come with us, Dick. (*Tries to raise DICK out of his chair to his right*) Help me, Gertrude. (*GERTRUDE crosses front to L. of DICK down R.*)

DICK. (*Pettishly*) I don't want to be moved.

BETTY. (*Mothering him*) It will be much more comfortable for you lying down.

GERTRUDE. (*In mater of fact tone*) Come along, Dick. Don't act like a spoiled child. (*GERTRUDE and BETTY raise DICK to his feet*)

BETTY. (*Solicitously looking at DICK's feet*) Can you walk all right?

HARRY. What's his walking got to do with his face?

DICK. (*Sarcastically, getting his 'strength back*) I didn't expect any sympathy from you. (*GERTRUDE, BETTY, and DICK move up R. c. slowly*)

HARRY. You won't get any!

BETTY. (*As trio gets up c.*) You go up to the room, Dick, and I'll get you an ice-bag. (*Crosses toward L. 2*)

DICK. (*Pausing on landing*) An ice-bag! What for? (*GERTRUDE on landing, beside DICK*)

BETTY. (*Turning at L. 2*) To take down the inflammation! Gertrude! Don't forget the witch-hazel!

GERTRUDE. All right! (*Crosses down to fireplace down R. Gets bottle*)

HARRY. (*As BETTY exits L. 2 after GERTRUDE crosses him*) Betty! (*Goes to L. upper edge table c.*)

DICK. I absolutely forbid my sister ever to speak to you again!

HARRY. (*Dropping back to table edge, scarcely controlling himself*) You'll get yours, young man, and soon.

DICK. Hah! Listen to little Black-Hand! Hah! Hah! (*HARRY makes a dive for DICK, stumbling over lower stair step. DICK the instant HARRY starts for him, darts upstairs and exits L. U. closing door with bang*)

BETTY. (*Off L. 2*) Gertrude!

GERTRUDE. (*Turning L. at chair down R., bottle in hand*) Yes?

BETTY. (*Off L. 2*) Come, help me chop ice!

GERTRUDE. All right. (*Up R. c. to rear table up c.*)

HARRY. (*Getting great idea, crosses to GERTRUDE up c., assuming mysterious warning tones*) No, wait a minute, Gertrude. (*Takes her hands*) I think you're making an awful mistake about Tom! The poor fellow is in a dangerous frame of mind.

GERTRUDE. Oh, don't be absurd. (*Impatiently attempts to cross HARRY*)

HARRY. (*Stopping GERTRUDE, impressively*)

Now, now. Wait! You know it's always these fat men who do the most desperate things.

GERTRUDE. (*At a loss*) How do you mean?

HARRY. (*Slowly moving GERTRUDE toward up c.*) This is no time to talk about it. The thing to do now is to stop him—before it's too late.

GERTRUDE. (*Alarmed and impressed*) Stop him? Where is he?

HARRY. (*Looking L. 2 for BETTY, pointing off up c. to R.*) You'll find him down in the ashes.

GERTRUDE. (*Eyeing HARRY, hypnotized by his sincerity*) Ashes!

HARRY. And you are the only one who can save him!

GERTRUDE. (*Terrified*) Save him! From what?

HARRY. (*Seriously*) I don't know. But I don't like the way he's been acting.

GERTRUDE. Oh! Good heavens! (*Rushes out c. and off to R.*)

HARRY. (*Instantaneous glee; then becomes serious; goes up to L. c. as BETTY enters L. 2 with ice-bag. (Nuts to rattle) With wide-eyed intensity, crossing to BETTY, takes her R. hand and leads her quickly down L. c. BETTY too astonished to resist*) Betty! You've got to listen to me.

BETTY. (*Recovering below table L. c.*) You can't compel me to!

HARRY. (*Decisively*) You're my wife.

BETTY. Pardon me! That mistake has been rectified.

HARRY. I'll have the decree set aside.

BETTY. You can't. Not without my consent.

HARRY. You did promise to re-marry me a while ago!

BETTY. That was before I found you out!

HARRY. Found out what? (*Pleading lovingly*) Good Heavens, Betty! You're not going to hold me responsible for that woman's actions!

BETTY. I suppose she came here to see me?

HARRY. No. No, she came because— Well, it was all Tom's fault—

BETTY. Ah! (*Pause.—Sarcastically*) I knew you would blame somebody—but poor Tom— (*Turns up L. C.*)

HARRY. (*Stopping BETTY*) Wait! This is our last chance. If after you've heard me, you still insist on our going our separate ways, I'll give up the fight. But, you must give me this last chance to explain.

BETTY. (*With anger and tears*) You can't explain away that woman's presence here, and your being in that room with her.

HARRY. (*Reasoning*) Good heavens, Betty! If I wasn't honestly and sincerely in love with you, would I be pleading with you, here, at this moment? If I wanted that woman, or any other woman, for that matter, what is there to prevent me from having her—now that our divorce has been granted? Deep down in your heart you know that I love you, and that I don't want any other woman in the world! Why won't you be honest with yourself? You must feel that what I say is true.

BETTY. (*Sobbingly*) I do feel it's true, but I can't understand how so many appearances can be against you!

HARRY. Never mind appearances. Listen to what your heart tells you. You'll never regret it if you do!

BETTY. (*Twisting ice-bag*) What do you want me to do?

HARRY. I want you to trust me. I want you to marry me!

BETTY. (*Joyously*) Oh, Harry! (*Goes to HARRY, hands on his cheeks, left hand holding ice-bag against his cheek*)

HARRY. My darling! (*Goes R. a step as ice-bag hits him*) Ouch! What the—?

BETTY. (*Laughing*) Oh, I forgot Dick's ice-bag! It's all melting! (*Turns up-stage*)

HARRY. (*Quickly stopping her*) Never mind Dick! (*Holding BETTY in arms, rapidly taking her off her feet*) We'd better make a break for it while we have the chance.

BETTY. I don't like to leave him while he's sick.

HARRY. It's only a scratch! You get your coat and bag as quickly as possible. I'll see if I can't find a rig to get us out of this place. (*Swings BETTY to his right*)

BETTY. (*Starting to throw arms about his neck*) Oh, Harry!

HARRY. (*Fending BETTY off,—business with ice-bag*) No, you don't. (*Laughs, quickly moving BETTY front c.*) God bless you! Don't be any longer than you can help! Hurry! (*Exits down L. BETTY goes up R. c. to stairs. DICK enters L. U. in time to see HARRY exit L. down-stairs; stops BETTY imperiously. BETTY starts back a step*)

DICK. What has Harry Lindsey been saying to you?

BETTY. Nothi—

DICK. Now, don't deny it! I just saw him go out through that door. (*Pointing down L. BETTY comes down R. c. by table. DICK comes down L. c. by table*)

BETTY. (*Across table—happily*) He's proposed to me again.

DICK. What? (*Indignantly*)

BETTY. We're going to be married right away.

DICK. After what you've seen here with your own eyes?

BETTY. (*Across table, laying down the law*) Now, Dick! Understand, once and for all, you've got to stop meddling in my affairs! You're not

going to rob me of my happiness just because you happen to be my brother!

DICK. You don't know what you're saying.

BETTY. It's quite enough to know that you've wronged my Harry! And the least you can do is to make it up to him with a little kindness.

DICK. Wronged him? Wronged a man like that! Why, he's the most depraved——

BETTY. Now, that will do. I won't listen to another word.

DICK. But, Betty!

BETTY. (*Crosses DICK, up L. C. and off L. U. as she speaks*) I've quite made up my mind and nothing you can say or do will change it. (*Exits L. U.*)

DICK. (*Disgustedly,—below table c.*) Well, for the love of Heaven!

CHAUFFEUR. (*Enters angrily down L., sees DICK, pauses; carries HATTIE's check*) S-a-y! (*DICK faces CHAUFFEUR*) Is there anybody here can cash a check?

DICK. What kind of a check?

CHAUFFEUR. (*Crosses to DICK*) I just got it from a fare, but it's too much for me! (*Passes DICK the check*)

DICK. (*Astonished*) A thousand dollars!

CHAUFFEUR. Yes, she must think I'm a policeman.

HATTIE. (*Enters down L. goes down L. c.*) Here! What are you doing with my check?

CHAUFFEUR. (*Angrily*) Trying—to get it cashed!

HATTIE. (*Angrily*) Well, I'll attend to that. Get on your own job!

CHAUFFEUR. (*Hesitates a moment—angrily*) All right—(*Crossing to down L.*) But it has to be the right color, or we don't start! (*Exits down L.*)

HATTIE. (*Crossing to DICK*) Hand it over, please.

DICK. One moment. When did Tom Robinson give you this?

HATTIE. He didn't give it to me!

DICK. His name is on it.

HATTIE. Let me see. (*Takes check from DICK, looks at it, and whines*) Why, I never noticed that! (*Looks L., suspiciously*) There's something phoney about this!

DICK. Where did you get it?

HATTIE. Harry Lindsey gave it to me.

DICK. (*Triumphantly—turns R.*) Harry Lindsey! Ha, ha!—(*Pauses, faces HATTIE—judicially*) What for?

HATTIE. (*Indignantly*) That's none of your business!

DICK. Pardon me. But it is my business. (*Pause,—meaningly*) Why didn't he give you his own check?

HATTIE. (*Almost crying*) I don't know. I don't even know if this is any good. (*Looks at check*)

DICK. (*Business-like air*) See here. You'd better leave this in my hands. (*Reaches for check*)

HATTIE. (*Left hand holding check away from DICK, moving L. wisely*) No, I won't! I'm going to see a lawyer!

DICK. Well, I'm a lawyer!

HATTIE. (*Facing DICK*) You!

DICK. Honest to God I am! (*Pause, taking check from HATTIE, rapidly and convincingly*) I'll see that you get the cash for this all right. (*Taking HATTIE R. C. below table c.*) All you've got to do is to follow my instructions. You step into this room for a moment and I'll call you when you're needed.

HATTIE. (*At R. 2, turns on DICK suspiciously*) See here! I don't know what you're up to!

DICK. If I'm your lawyer you've got to trust me.

HATTIE. All right, but if you try any funny business——

DICK. (*Urging HATTIE off R. 2*) Oh, nothing like that! (*HATTIE exit R. 2 closing door. Running up R. C. across rear and upstairs L. triumphantly*) I guess this'll fix Harry Lindsey, all right!

DOOLIN. (*Entering on run up c. from off R., sees DICK*) Where's that fellow Lindsey? (*RANJE enters on run up c. from off R. on DOOLIN's heels and up c. to L. of DOOLIN*)

DICK. (*Facing DOOLIN, half way upstairs, triumphantly*) I don't know where he is, but I know where's he's going to be. (*Exits L. U.*)

DOOLIN. (*To RANJE*) Didn't you say he was here?

RANJE. (*Apologetically*) He was here a minute ago.

DOOLIN. Take a peek in that room. (*Indicating L. 2*)

(*RANJE starts for L. 2. HARRY's footsteps off down L. on run.*)

DOOLIN. Wait! Here he is now! (*To RANJE, then down R. C. to lower edge table c. HARRY enters down L. on run, and across front. Stopping HARRY c.*) Now, then, young man! I'll give you one more chance to make good.

HARRY. (*Brushing past DOOLIN impatiently, down R.*) Oh, don't bother me, I'm busy!

DOOLIN. (*Angrily up R. C. facing HARRY*) It's pay or go to jail; take your choice.

HARRY. (*At chair down R., taking DICK's coat off it*) Don't make me laugh. I'm going to get my grip and get out of this! (*Looks at coat, sees it is DICK's, throws it to floor and exits angrily R. 2*)

DOOLIN. (*Crossing quickly to R. 2*) You'll not be leaving here except to go to jail. (*Locks door R. 2 turning L. along front on the run*) Come along, Ranje! I'll keep this key till the constable comes. Come along Ranje! (*Exits down L. RANJE exits*)

down L. after DOOLIN. HATTIE and HARRY *ad lib.* loudly off R. 2. HARRY pounds on door off R. 2)

NORAH. (*Enters hurriedly up C. from off R., talking to herself and coming down L. C. Hears pounding, looks R. 2 crosses front impatiently to R. 2*) What's the matter?

HARRY. (*Off R. 2 loudly*) Open this door! (*Pounds an instant, then stops*)

NORAH. (*Tries door R. 2*) It's locked.

HARRY. (*Off R. 2*) Of course it's locked. Open it or I'll break it down!

NORAH. Where's the key?

HARRY. (*Off R. 2*) That fool Doolin must have it! Haven't you a duplicate?

NORAH. A what?

HARRY. (*Off R. 2*) A dupli—another key.

NORAH. I'll see if my husband has one. (*Crosses to front C. hurriedly. HARRY off R. 2 pounds on door R. 2. At C. faces door R. 2 angrily*) Will you keep quiet till I find him?

HARRY. (*Off R. 2 impatiently*) Yes, but hurry!

NORAH. All right! (*Exits hurriedly down L. muttering angrily to herself*)

HATTIE. (*In high pitched, angry voice off R. 2 E.*) Say! Do you know that was a bum check you gave me?

BETTY. (*Enters L. U. with check in hand and comes down staircase*) That isn't Harry's signature.

DICK. (*Entering L. U. after BETTY and following her down*) Of course it isn't. (*BETTY comes down L. C. to front of table C. Coming L. of BETTY*) He didn't want anybody to see it, so he used Tom's name.

BETTY. (*Angrily*) Do you mean to accuse my husband of forging Tom's name! (*GERTRUDE enters gaily from R. up C. and down R. C. singing*)

DICK. (*To BETTY*) Tom hadn't any reason for giving her money!

GERTRUDE. (*All agog, R. of BETTY*) Oh, Betty, dear. I've made up with Tom!

BETTY. (*With deadly concern*) Gertrude!

GERTRUDE. (*Sensing trouble. Seriously*) Yes, dear. What's the trouble now?

BETTY. (*Extending check*) Is that your husband's signature?

GERTRUDE. (*Crosses to BETTY, takes check, looks at it,—casually*) Yes.

DICK. (*Pointedly, meaningly*) You're sure—of that, are you?

GERTRUDE. (*Casually*) I ought to be. I've seen it often enough.

BETTY. (*To DICK, in proof of HARRY'S innocence*) There you are!

DICK. Wait! That isn't all there is to it. (*Looking at GERTRUDE*)

GERTRUDE. (*Casually, to BETTY*) You haven't told me where you got this?

BETTY. (*Slowly, pointedly*) Dick got it. From Miss King.

GERTRUDE. (*Aghast*) What! My husband gave this to that woman? (*TOM off up C. to R. starts singing "Every night he calls her Snooky Ookums, etc., on up C.; dance à la ballerina down R. C. to front*)

DICK. She says Harry Lindsey gave it to her.

BETTY. (*To DICK*) That isn't true.

GERTRUDE. Wait! Here's Tom now. (*As she sees TOM, in a stern, cold, deadly tone*) Tom!

TOM. (*Down R. C. front, stops dance, faces GERTRUDE all smiles*) Yes, dear?

GERTRUDE. Come here!

TOM. (*Whipped, goes L. a step*) What's wrong now?

GERTRUDE. What do you mean by going about giving money to strange women?

TOM. (*Outraged*) I never in my life gave money to a strange woman!

GERTRUDE. (*With rising inflexion—same tone*) Then why did you give Miss King a check for a thousand dollars?

TOM. (*Highly moral*) Who says I gave her a check?

GERTRUDE. She does.

TOM. Where is she?

DICK. In that room. (*Indicating R. 2*)

GERTRUDE. (*Commandingly raising R. arm points R. 2*) Call her! (*DICK crosses front to R. 2 E.*)

TOM. (*Imitating GERTRUDE*) Call her! (*Strikes pose*)

DICK. (*Knocking on door R. 2*) Miss King! Miss King!

HATTIE. (*Off R. 2 peevishly*) Oh, what is it?

DICK. (*Becoming the lawyer—turning down R.*) Come out, if you please! (*Down R. below chair facing front*) I'm ready for you now.

HATTIE. (*Off R. 2 angrily*) I can't come out! I'm locked in!

ALL. (*Astonished*) Locked in!

DICK. (*Goes quickly up and shakes door R. 2 violently*) Open the door, please.

TOM. Where's the key? (*NORAH enters down L. with bunch of keys, pauses*)

DICK. Must be on the inside. (*Shakes door*)

NORAH. (*To L. c. front—testily*) What's the matter?

TOM. Have you a key to that door?

NORAH. Yes. (*Holds up keys*)

BETTY. Give it to me. (*Takes keys from NORAH*)

GERTRUDE. Give it to me. (*Takes keys from BETTY*)

TOM. Give it to me. (*Takes keys from GERTRUDE*)

DICK. (*Crossing to Tom*) Give it to me!

(Takes keys from TOM, and unlocks door R. 2. Throws it open and comes down R.) It's all right, Miss King. (Pleased with himself) Come out, if you please. (HARRY enters R. 2 and down to front R. C. without noticing anyone. HATTIE enters R. 2 after HARRY, comes down to his R. All aghast at seeing duo enter from R. 2)

(HARRY comically starting away from HATTIE as she comes to his R. at front; sees BETTY; another start. Flabbergasted, and makes silly attempts to appear unconcerned.)

BETTIE. (As she sees HARRY with HATTIE) What! Again?

TOM. Good Lord!

DICK. (After HARRY's comedy business, angrily) You scoundrel! (Starts toward HARRY)

BETTY. (Commandingly to DICK) Wait Dick! (Crosses to L. of HARRY; pauses; outraged triumph) Well! Perhaps you can explain it this time?

HARRY. (Affecting calm) Certainly. I went in that room for my coat, and that fool Doolin locked the door. (Comedy embarrassment, endeavoring to appear at ease, tries several poses, which don't fit)

BETTY. (Sarcastically) I suppose Miss King went in there for her coat?

HARRY. No, she was already in there.

BETTY. (Sarcastically) Oh, indeed! How fortunate for you!

HATTIE. (Indignantly to BETTY) See here! Are you trying to put me in a compromising position?

DICK. (Sarcastically) You've never been found in that position before—have you?

HATTIE. (Proudly) Never! Except in the presence of witnesses.

BETTY. (*Indignantly*) Well, there are plenty of witnesses this time, thank goodness!

HARRY. But this is absurd, Betty!—(*Pleadingly —pivoting to face her*)

BETTY. (*Caustically*) We won't discuss it any further. (*Turning up L. C. to stairs up L.*) The situation speaks for itself.

HARRY. (*Goes up R. C. with ad lib expostulations; comes across rear to landing up L. C.*) But, Betty!

BETTY. (*Half-way upstairs, turns to HATTIE*) You may take my husband and welcome! I'm through with him! (*Exits L. U., closing door*)

HARRY. (*As BETTY goes*) This is all rot, I tell you! Betty! Bet—! (*BETTY exits, he turns front, groping for words*) Oh, damn! (*Exits angrily L. 2*)

DICK. (*Gleefully*) Well, that settles him! (*Turns to go up R. C.*)

HATTIE. (*Stopping DICK*) Wait a minute! Where's my check?

DICK. I haven't got it.

GERTRUDE. No! I have it! (*Comes R. to R. lower edge of table C.*) I want to know where you got it?

HATTIE. (*Angrily to DICK at down R.*) You gave her my check! (*Scornfully*) I thought you were a lawyer!

GERTRUDE. (*Accusingly to HATTIE*) Did my husband give this to you?

TOM. (*Highly moral, down L.*) Certainly not!

GERTRUDE. (*Accusing TOM*) Then, how did it come in her possession? You won't deny your own signature! (*Holds out check*)

TOM. (*Crosses to GERTRUDE, looks at check but doesn't take it; shows relief and indignation*) Why, that's the loan I made to Harry a while ago!

DICK. Then it was Harry?

TOM. (*Indignantly*) Of course it was! And I'll make him admit it! (*Going up L. c. toward L. 2*) He's no right to involve me in a thing like this! (*Faces L. at L. 2*) You wait here! I'll fetch him! (*Exits L. 2*)

HATTIE. (*Angrily crossing to GERTRUDE at c.*) See here! I've had enough of this. That check is mine! And I want it back!

GERTRUDE. (*With haughty indignation*) Well, if you think I'm going to have strange women cashing checks with my husband's name on them, you're very much mistaken! (*Crosses to HATTIE cattishly, tearing check at each ejaculation*) There! There! There! Take it! (*Throws bits of check to floor, circles up L. c. and off up c. and to R.*)

HATTIE. (*Broken-heartedly*) Oh! (*Circles to L. of check, bending over*) Did you see what she did to my poor check? (*Straightens up, stamps angrily*) I won't let her do that to me! (*Circles up L. c. toward c. arch*)

DICK. (*Crossing front to c.*) Where are you going?

HATTIE. (*Turning at up c.*) I'm going to make her settle for this right now. (*Exits up c. and off to R.*) Come back here. Wait a minute.

DICK. (*Breathlessly up L. c.*) Oh, my God! (*Exits up c. off to R. TOM angrily enters L. 2 dragging HARRY*)

HARRY. (*Expostulatingly*) I haven't denied giving her the check!

(*Start fire-bell off L. faintly.*)

TOM. (*At up L. c. near table c.*) No! But that woman does, and you've got to explain it to Gertrude. (*Goes to rear table c.*)

HARRY. (*Crossing to TOM up c.*) All right, I'll square it for you. (*Listens*) What the deuce is that?

(Start motor. Fire bell louder. Auto horn in distance.)

TOM. *(Listens. Runs to imaginary window front down R. C. raises shade, wipes moisture off window, and peers out shading eyes with hands. During TOM'S action, bring the bell, horn, motor to height, fire revolver, air, stop bell. Motor runs on for a moment. Stop air. After moment's pause,—facing HARRY)* Well—there goes the fire department. Now you stay here! Don't you go away! *(Turns up to arch up c. with line)* I'm going to find Gertrude. *(Faces HARRY in arch)* You're not going to ruin my life. *(Exits up c. and off to R.)*

(HARRY goes hopelessly to up c. looks off, leans against R. lintel of arch in utter dejection. BETTY enters L. U. comes down-stairs with bag, garbed for journey, sets bag on chair R. table L. C. Casually moving c. toward c. table fixing gloves. HARRY sees BETTY, goes with almost hopelessly determination to R. of table c.)

HARRY. *(BETTY with a little start, then with pettish hauteur stops. HARRY continuing)* I'm going to make one more try.

BETTY. *(Testily)* Another explanation, I suppose?

HARRY. *(Quietly, feelingly)* No. I'm not going into that again. I've told you the truth. But, I realize how fishy it sounds. And you can believe it or not, as you choose. There is only one thing now that I want to know; are you or are you not, going to marry me?

BETTY. *(Sharply)* I am not!

HARRY. *(Quietly, warningly)* Remember, I shan't ask you again.

BETTY. (*Positively*) I am not going to marry you any more.

HARRY. Very well. I'm through! I've done everything in my power to show my love for you but since you evidently want none of it I'll seek my happiness elsewhere. (*Goes up R. c., across rear and upstairs L.*)

BETTY. (*Caustically, to front c.*) Miss King might oblige—! (*Goes to R. c.*)

HARRY. (*Turning on landing of stairs*) Miss King has some appreciation at least. But I wouldn't marry you, or any other woman, now. I've had all I want! I'll get my bag and get out of the place if I have to walk all the way back to New York! Good-bye! (*Exits L. U.*)

(*BETTY stamps foot, angrily, crosses to chair down R.; sits angrily, tapping foot. FIREMAN enters quickly down L. head down, carrying huge red fire-axe. He has red moustache, flannel shirt, old trousers, comedy shoes, belt about waist. As he enters he turns as though in response to someone off L. I. BETTY sees FIREMAN, rises and with a prolonged scream rushes up and across to stairs up L. FIREMAN jumps to face BETTY with a start, crossing to c. front and eyeing her motionless; backs to foots. BETTY on stairs turns to face FIREMAN, hold picture.*)

FIREMAN. (*As laugh dies*) Well! Where's the fire, miss?

BETTY. (*Nervously*) The fire? Oh, the fire's out.

FIREMAN. (*Indignantly*) You mean to say you put it out before we got here?

FIRE CAPTAIN. (*Enters busily down L. carries huge trumpet with red cord, flat cap with monogram, red shirt with "Captain" on it and crossed hooks*

and ladder on breast. Creased trousers, patent shoes) Any sign of a fire?

FIREMAN. Too late, Cap. They put it out themselves.

FIRE CAPTAIN. (*Crossing front to R. c.*) Well, they got their nerve!

DOOLIN. (*Entering down L. on run*) Where's them firemen? Where's them—(*Pauses L. c. seeing firemen*)

FIRE CAPTAIN. (*Angrily*) Did you send for the Department?

DOOLIN. (*To table c.*) And who might you be, young fellow?

FIRE CAPTAIN. (*Importantly*) Captain! Hook-and-Ladder Number One. And there's my shirt. (*Pointing proudly to his breast*)

DOOLIN. Well, there's a fellow here I want arrested. He set fire to my garage.

FIREMAN. Oho! An incendiary, eh?

DOOLIN. (*Off-handedly*) No, he's a New Yorker. He's in that room! (*Points R. 2. FIRE CAPTAIN and FIREMAN ad lib and rush to R. 2, throwing door open. Getting key from pocket, front c.*) Wait a minute. I've got the key.

FIRE CAPTAIN. (*Facing front angrily*) The door's open!

DOOLIN. (*Astonished*) What?

FIREMAN. (*Angrily front*) There ain't nobody in there.

FIRE CAPTAIN. (*Come's down R. a bit. Angrily*) What you trying to do—kid us?

(NOTE: DICK enters up c. stops c.)

(BETTY slowly comes to down L. c., listening to scene.)

DOOLIN. (*Angrily*) Then he's got away! Who opened that door?

BETTY. (*At DOOLIN'S L.*) Then you really did lock him in there?

DOOLIN. (*Angrily accusing BETTY*) Who let him out? Did you have anything to do with it?

BETTY. (*Taken aback, frightened, nervously*) I? No—no—no.

DOOLIN. (*Acusing BETTY*) Where did he go?

BETTY. (*Nervously*) Why—why—I—I—think he went down to the garage.

DOOLIN. (*Turning to FIREMAN*) After him, boys! He can't get away! After him! (*Turns up R. C. FIRE CAPTAIN and FIREMAN run up R. C. off C. to R. ad lib. DOOLIN ad lib up R. C. off C. to R. BETTY turns up C. toward stairs*)

DICK. (*Triumphantly to BETTY at up C.*) Aha! You see?

BETTY. (*Wheeling angrily to DICK*) You're responsible for all this. If it hadn't been for you, we never would have had any trouble. We would never have been divorced in the first place. You've robbed me of my husband, and I hate you for it! (*Swings down L. quickly*)

DICK. (*Coming down L. C.*) Good Lord, what's happened now?

BETTY. (*Facing DICK, half-crying*) He's refused to marry me. I've lost him forever.

DICK. (*Caustic laugh, crossing to BETTY*) Good riddance to him!

BETTY. (*Wheeling on DICK and forcing him along backwards to down L. during her speech*) Is that so? Well! Just you see how it will profit you! I've given you everything you ever had. The means to study law, a weekly allowance, and money for every wildcat scheme you ever went into. But from now on, never come to me for another dollar! I'll never loan you another cent! I don't even want you to live in the same house with me! (*Slaps him by*

necktie, goes up toward c., angrily) I'm through with you.

DICK. But, Betty—!

BETTY. (*Up c. in arch, turns*) Just you try to get any more money out of me! Just you try! (*Exits up c. off to R.*)

DICK. (*Hurriedly following BETTY up c.*) Wait a minute, Betty! (*Calling off R.*) I can fix it for you. I can fix it all right. (*HARRY enters L. U. with cap, coat, and gloves, in one hand, and suitcase in the other comes down-stairs in series of rapid steps, then a stride, then short steps rapidly, comes to table c., plunks suitcase on chair L. of table c., starts putting on gloves. DICK crosses rear and down L. c. eyeing HARRY. In low voice*) Where do you think you're going?

HARRY. (*Intensely*) I don't know that it concerns you where I go!

DICK. You bet it concerns me. (*HARRY takes up suit-case and starts toward door down L. DICK goes quickly below table L. c. between HARRY and L.*) Ah, ah, no you don't.

HARRY. (*Pauses, with tense menacing tones*) Don't you make me any angrier than I am!

DICK. You're not going to leave my sister in any such hole as this!

HARRY. Your sister can take care of herself I guess.

DICK. How about the scandal of her coming to this road-house with you? (*Bullying*) A woman can't fight that, you know!

HARRY. What do you want me to do about it?

DICK. (*Laying down the law*) You've got to marry her!

HARRY. (*Surprised*) What!

DICK. Do you think I'm going to let you compromise my sister and then leave her in the lurch?

HARRY. (*Pointedly*) Aren't you the young man

who made the most frantic efforts to separate us?

DICK. I am. But, in view of existing conditions, I withdraw all objections!

HARRY. Indeed! Well, it may interest you to know that your sister has refused to marry me.

DICK. (*At a loss—quietly*) What? Why, she says you refused to marry her!

HARRY. Well, as a matter of fact, I believe I did say something of the kind—and I see no reason to change my mind now. (*Starts L.*)

DICK. (*Quickly, his hand up*) Wait a minute! There's something more! (*Pleadingly*) Who's going to look after her if you go? She has to have some protection.

HARRY. (*Sets suit-case on table L. c. Sarcastically*) Well, what's the matter with Little Brother?

DICK. (*Down-and-out*) She says she doesn't want to see me again! She blames me for the whole business. You see what I'm in for.

HARRY. Aha! So that's it, eh? (*BETTY enters up c. from off R., sees them down R. c.—quietly watches them*)

DICK. Please marry my sister. (*HARRY turns R. enough to see BETTY, lets audience see that he sees her, but DICK and BETTY do not think so. Continuing*) Ah, go on! Marry her, and then we can all be friends again.

HARRY. (*Acting for benefit of BETTY, front*) No! I'm through with you! And I'm through with your sister. From now on I'm going to be all that she thinks I am! Out of my way, please. (*Starts L. taking bag from table*)

BETTY. (*Commandingly with her hand up*) Wait!

HARRY. (*Pauses, looks at BETTY, playing indignation to DICK*) Why didn't you tell me that she was here?

BETTY. (*Coming down just beyond lower R. corner table c.*) You can't go yet! I want to speak to you.

DICK. (*Hopelessly, crossing front to BETTY*) It's no use, sis, he won't listen!

(HARRY sets suit-case on table L. c.)

BETTY. (*Impatiently*) Leave me alone with him!

DICK. But, Sis—!

BETTY. (*Commanding*) Leave me alone with him.

DICK. (*Weakly, to HARRY*) There goes my meal-ticket! (*Going up R. c.*) All right. (*Exits up c. off to R.*)

HARRY. (*Not looking at BETTY—with injured innocence*) Well?

(NOTE: BETTY and HARRY play this as reverse scene to that of act one where HARRY pleads with BETTY, each playing the other's part of ACT I. The whole scene is exaggerated.)

BETTY. (*Coaxingly*) You didn't mean what you said just now.

HARRY. Yes. I did.

BETTY. (*Coaxingly*) You didn't.

HARRY. Every word of it. I've quite made up my mind to go—straight to the devil!

BETTY. I shan't let you go on like this. Oh, it's not for my sake. It's for yours; I can't let you throw yourself away on that woman!

HARRY. (*Smiles at audience. Right side of face serious*) My life is my own. To do with as I please. (*Does not look at BETTY during whole scene*)

BETTY. Oh, Harry! For the sake of old memories!

HARRY. (*Foot business à la BETTY*) What—memories?

BETTY. (*Exaggerated romance*) Don't you remember, dear? Our first honeymoon. That wonderful day on the terrace!

HARRY. (*Bashfully*) You're taking advantage of me because you know I'm sentimental.

BETTY. (*Melodramatically*) Oh, Harry! I'm trying to save you from yourself! See! I haven't a shred of pride left. I'm on my knees! (*Starts to kneel*)

HARRY. (*Quickly, not looking at BETTY R., takes a step raising her to feet with R. hand*) Get up! Get up! Somebody might see you!

BETTY. I don't care if the whole world sees me. I shan't let you leave me like this!

HARRY. (*Facing BETTY*) You didn't believe me!

BETTY. (*Eagerly*) I do now! I've found out the truth.

HARRY. Will you promise never to doubt me again?

BETTY. (*Eagerly, taking a step to HARRY*) Yes, dear!

HARRY. (*Pinning her down*) Sure?

BETTY. Yes, dearest!

HARRY. Honest?

BETTY. Yes, dearest!

HARRY. Then—(*Relents, is about to take her in arms, steps back, putting her away from him*) No! I can't trust you! (*Crosses front to R. c. up R. c. to table up R.*)

BETTY. (*Miserably weeping, L. c.*) Oh—Harry! (*Blindly toward table c.*)

HARRY. (*Up c.*) No! You'd only change your mind again!

BETTY. (*Brokenly*) Oh, I haven't a change of mind left in me. (*Sinks into chair L. of table c. head on hands, on table, sobbing.* HARRY with smile.

Has achieved his point; crosses down to BETTY's L. touches her shoulder) Oh, Harry! (*Turns quickly to fall into HARRY's arms*)

HARRY. Wait! (*Holds BETTY away from him*)
Wait a moment! What are you going to do about your brother Dick?

BETTY. I'll do anything you want me to do.

HARRY. He's not to live with us again!

BETTY. No! I've already told him that.

HARRY. (*Changing to tenderness—eagerly*)
Good! Then we'll get away before anybody sees us! Where's your bag? (*Gets BETTY's bag from table C., and turns L.*)

CHAUFFEUR. (*Enters angrily down L. on a step, holds*) Say! (*HARRY pauses wonderingly*)
Where's that lady I brought out here?

HARRY. Hasn't she gone yet?

CHAUFFEUR. No. And I can't hang around here all night.

HARRY. Certainly not! You can take us back to New York!

CHAUFFEUR. But there's' twenty-seven dollars on the metre now!

HARRY. I'll take care of that. Here. Take this bag and start your motor going. (*Passing bag to CHAUFFEUR; then takes his own suitcase*) We'll be right with you.

CHAUFFEUR. All right Boss, I'm for you!
(*Takes bag and exits quickly down L.*)

HARRY. Quick, Betty! While we have the chance!

BETTY. Where are we going?

HARRY. To New Jersey! We've got the only thing on wheels and before anybody can catch up with us we'd be safely married! (*Taking BETTY off down L.*) Hurry! (*BETTY exits down L. with HARRY*)

TOM. (*Ad lib off up c. to R. on "married"*)
You keep away from my wife!

HATTIE. (*As she enters up c. from off R.*) No,
I won't! She's got to make good!

GERTRUDE. (*Enters up from off R. rear and down
L. c. looking about room, pauses down L. c.*) Well!
Where is he? Didn't you say Harry was here?

TOM. (*Coming in c. from off R. and down L. c.*)
I left him here. Not a minute ago!

(*HATTIE coming down R. c. to foots.*)

GERTRUDE. Just as I thought! (*Crosses to below
table c.*)

HATTIE. You're not going to get away from here
till you make good! (*Stopping GERTRUDE c.*)

GERTRUDE. (*Wildly breaking to L. c.*) Keep
her away! Keep her away!

TOM. (*Stepping down between GERTRUDE and
HATTIE*) Yes, darling.

(*FIRE CAPTAIN and FIREMEN enter up c. from off
R. dragging on DICK to down R. c. front. DICK
resisting as firemen drag him up on c. from off
R. and down to foots R. c.*)

FIREMAN. We got him!

FIRE CAPTAIN. Here he is! (*DOOLIN enters on
run up c. from off R. and comes down R. c.*)

DICK. (*Raging at down R. c.*) Let go of me,
you damn fools! Let go!

FIREMAN. Here! None of that!

TOM. What's he done?

FIREMAN. Incendiary!

DOOLIN. (*Taking stage*) Here! That's not the
man! (*Faces L.*) Where's Lindsey?

ALL. That's what we'd like to know!

NORAH. (*Entering down L.*) Mr. Doolin!

ALL. (*Facing NORAH*) Have you seen Lindsey?

NORAH. No.

DOOLIN. Did he pay his bill?

NORAH. Not a penny!

DOOLIN. (*Turning to DICK*) Then we'll keep this fellow.

DICK. (*Raging*) This is ridiculous. (*Struggling with firemen*)

(*Motor effect rear auditorium and taxi horn start.*)

RANJE. (*Enters on run down L.*) Norah? Norah!

ALL. Where's Lindsey?

RANJE. He is running away in the lady's taxi. (*Pointing down L. c. through window at front*)

HATTIE. My taxi! Don't let him go! (*Circles above DOOLIN to window down R. c. bending over looking out and front*)

DOOLIN. (*To firemen*) After him, you fellows! Quick! Before he starts.

(*FIREMEN and FIRE CAPTAIN go up round table c. and exit on run down L. DICK, DOOLIN and HATTIE looking out thru window down R. c. RANJE, TOM, GERTRUDE, and NORAH looking out thru window down L. c.*)

DICK. He can't leave me like this!

TOM. He's got to explain that check to my wife!

HATTIE. Stop him! Stop him! He owes me a thousand.

DOOLIN. There he is! Get him quick!

TOM. Harry! Hold on! You promised to tell my wife——

DICK. Hasn't somebody got a gun? Take a shot at the tires.

DOOLIN. After him! After him! Don't let him

get away. (*All the above lines given in a hubbub, not waiting for exact cues*)

(*During hubbub, effects are drawn from L. to R., along rear of auditorium.*)

Curtain

